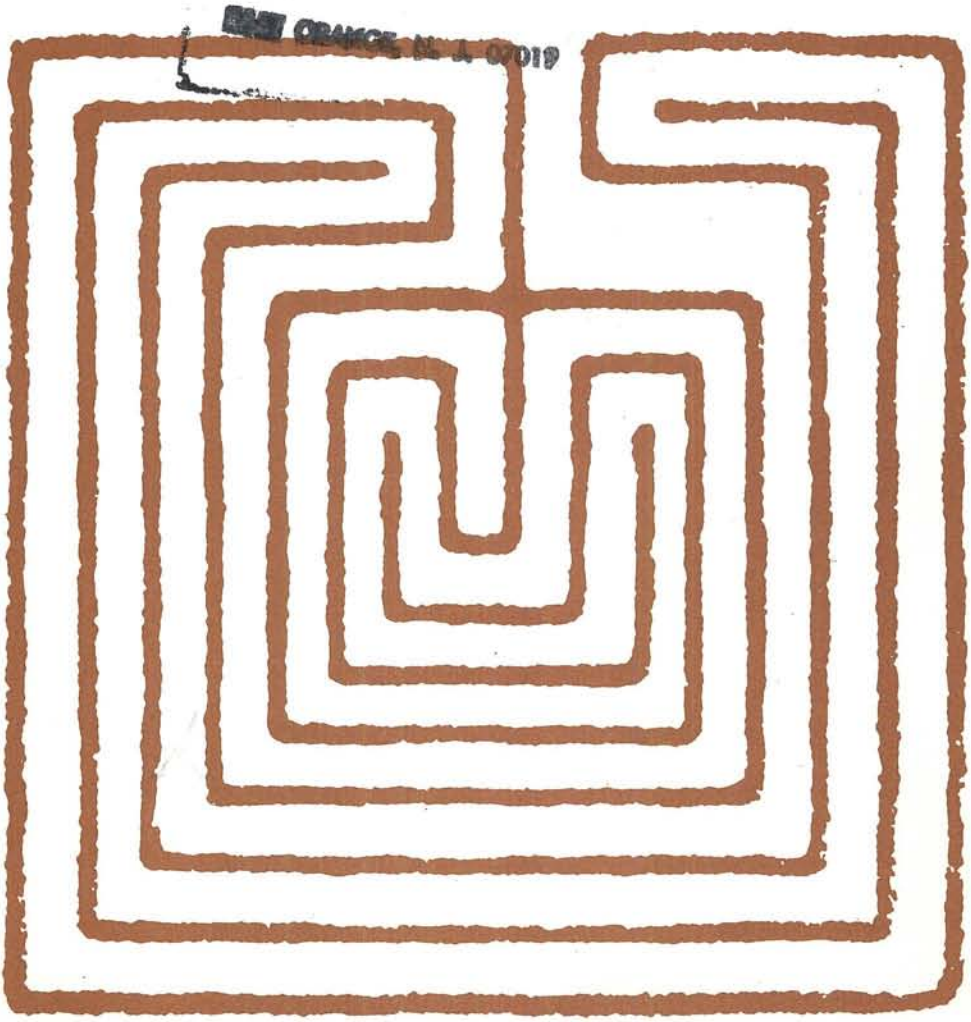
DÆDALUS

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

U.S. Defense Policy in the 1980s

Shahram Chubin
Jorge I. Domínguez
Sidney D. Drell
Colin S. Gray
David Holloway
Paul Jabber
Jan M. Lodal
Richard Pipes
Henry Rowen
Allen S. Whiting

UPSALA COLLEGE
LIBRARY
OCT 8 1980
EAST ORANGE, N. J. 07019



Fall 1980

$4.00

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fall 1980: U.S. Defense Policy in the 1980s. Issued as Vol. 109, No. 4 of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Stephen R. Graubard, Editor of the Academy and of Dædalus; *William H. Brubeck, Managing Editor; Marie Goldstein, Manuscript Editor; Nicholas Ziegler, Research Editor; Theresa Jaskul, Executive Assistant; Cheri Peck, Editorial Assistant; Ruth Taylor, Subscription Fulfillment Manager*

Board of Editors:

David Apter, Daniel Bell, Isaiah Berlin, François Bourricaud, Herman Feshbach, Paul Freund, Clifford Geertz, Lillian Hellman, Gerald Holton, Charles P. Kindleberger, Hans H. Landsberg, Martin Meyerson, Steven Muller, Carl E. Schorske, Judith N. Shklar, Jean Starobinski, Lewis Thomas, Robert Wilson

Editorial Office: Dædalus, *Norton's Woods, 140 Irving Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.*

Dædalus *(ISSN 0011-5266) is published quarterly by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Subscription rate: $14.00 one year; $24.00 two years; $34.00 three years. All subscriptions and single copy orders and change of address information should be addressed to the* Dædalus *Subscription Department, 1172 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02134.*

Printed in the United States of America. Printing Office: 2901 Byrdhill Road, Richmond, Virginia. Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 12-30299. Second-class postage paid at Boston, Massachusetts, and at additional mailing offices. *Copyright © 1980 by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S. Defense Policy in the 1980s

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DÆDALUS

Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

U.S. Defense Policy in the 1980s

	v	*Preface*
RICHARD PIPES	1	*Militarism and the Soviet State*
DAVID HOLLOWAY	13	*Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy*
SHAHRAM CHUBIN	31	*U.S. Security Interests in the Persian Gulf in the 1980s*
PAUL JABBER	67	*U.S. Interests and Regional Security in the Middle East*
HENRY ROWEN	81	*American Security Interests in Northeast Asia*
ALLEN S. WHITING	97	*China and the Superpowers: Toward the Year 2000*
JORGE I. DOMÍNGUEZ	115	*The United States and Its Regional Security Interests: The Caribbean, Central, and South America*
COLIN S. GRAY	135	*Strategic Stability Reconsidered*
JAN M. LODAL	155	*Deterrence and Nuclear Strategy*
SIDNEY D. DRELL	177	*Arms Control: Is There Still Hope?*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

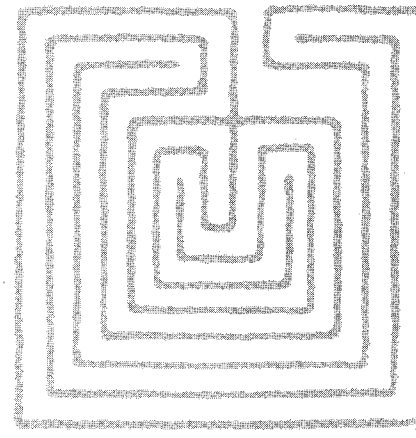
FALL 1980: U.S. DEFENSE POLICY IN THE 1980s

Issued as Vol. 109, No. 4 of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

ADVISORY GROUP

Les Aspin, Robert Berman, Harvey Brooks, Richard Burt, Jorge I. Domínguez, Sidney D. Drell, Les Gelb, Colin S. Gray, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, David Holloway, Thomas L. Hughes, William Hyland, Paul Jabber, William Kincade, Joseph Kruzel, Robert Legvold, Pierre Lellouche, John Lewis, Jan M. Lodal, Michael Nacht, Uwe Nerlich, Paul Nitze, Richard Perle, Richard Pipes, George Quester, George W. Rathjens, Henry Rowen, Jack P. Ruina, Enid Schoettle

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Preface to the Issue: "U.S. Defense Policy in the 1980s"

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DECADE CAN MAKE! No one living in Europe between 1914 and 1924, or between 1934 and 1944, would doubt that. Nor, for that matter, would many Americans today, recollecting the world of 1960 or 1970. In the latter part of the twentieth century, when a single decade, or two, may be enough to separate a time of optimism and self-confidence from one of doubt and despair, there is reason to ask whether such dramatic changes in fact occur because the objective circumstances change so rapidly, or whether it is principally popular perceptions that change, that make individuals who live through a period of this kind imagine that they have indeed witnessed dramatic turnabouts.

If one reads today the issue of *Daedalus* published in the fall of 1960, entitled "Arms Control," and compares it with this issue, or with the one scheduled to follow in the winter, one cannot fail to be struck by large and important differences: it is as if they speak of wholly different universes. These new issues of *Daedalus* offer an agenda of concerns scarcely conceived of by those preoccupied with weapons, defense, and arms control at the time when John F. Kennedy was preparing to assume the presidency. Yet, the Soviet Union's nuclear capability was clearly growing even in that earlier period, and the consciousness of the importance of that development made many believe that it was no longer possible for the United States to persevere in its "cold war" attitudes and policies, which had seemed so necessary just a few years earlier.

Those engaged in trying to describe and analyze what a nuclear holocaust might be—what war in the thermonuclear age could bring—had the same grounds for their fears in 1960 as those concerned with these issues today. They knew then what others know today—the destructive potential of the new weapons. Fearing their use, they believed the prevention of war to be imperative. For many who understood the character of the new armament—the relative ease of its production and dissemination—arms control seemed the only safe and reasonable route. Yet, in arguing for arms control, those who wrote in 1960 saw no necessity to consult a historical record. If they had been told to refer to the record of the disarmament efforts of the 1920s, or review again the efforts made in the decades before World War I, the suggestion would have seemed bizarre, certainly unconventional. For those who became charter members of the new so-called arms control community, the initiatives of the League of Nations and of earlier periods carried no significance. They were, indeed, scarcely known. No one insisted that the earlier disarmament conferences and arms control agreements provided a record of success and failure that the new experts might profit from consulting.

How is this indifference to the past, this slight regard for the efforts that others had so recently made, to be explained? The answer, on one level, is quite

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

simple. For those, writing in 1960, concerned with war and peace, particularly with the prevention of atomic war, the historical record was thought to provide nothing in the way of useful data. Most of the new experts literally never considered consulting such a record; some would have been surprised to learn one existed. They believed that the new weapons created wholly new hazards, that the control of these arms could be achieved best by those who understood how they were made, how they might be deployed, what damage they were capable of, and how they could be monitored and controlled. Nuclear weapons, they insisted, were not simply weapons with greater destructive potential; they were new kinds of weapons that called for a new kind of control and, indeed, a new style of diplomacy.

The destructive potential of thermonuclear arms made their threat cosmic and immediate. Millions of lives could be snuffed out in a moment; other millions could be permanently disabled; genetic damage might extend for generations into the future, with wholly unpredictable consequences. While the two atomic explosions over Japan in the summer of 1945 gave some modest hint of the destructive power of nuclear weapons, they did not prefigure the destruction that would follow from the use of thermonuclear weapons with a thousand times more power, deployed over vast territories. Also, where both major powers, the United States and the USSR, boasted an arsenal of such weapons, and where each had delivery systems to guarantee that many of their intended targets would be hit, atomic Armageddon carried the threat of near-universal destruction. Modern civilization—human existence itself—was felt to be in jeopardy. The existence of new missile capabilities on both sides made almost every part of the world vulnerable, and gave new meaning to the old idea of "surprise attack." Although it was becoming increasingly difficult to imagine how war would break out, what mobilization would entail, whether hostilities might be concluded in a matter of hours or days, and what the human and material devastation of a nuclear exchange might be, the prophesies were uniformly pessimistic.

In 1960 familiarity with the technology of the new arms systems was fairly uncommon. Thus it was easy to believe that the old concepts of military offense and defense were outmoded and that wholly new concepts were necessary. Those who knew most about the new weapons systems—scientists and technologists—emerged among the more prominent theorists of war, peace, and arms control. Since there was no significant experience to consult for studying these complex new issues, the guidance that historians and others who lived on a knowledge of the past could offer was minimal. Those endowed with theoretical capability, who understood game theory and the like—economists and mathematicians—but also psychologists and behaviorists generally were thought to possess the kinds of intelligence that would be useful in developing the concepts needed. Particularly in the United States, where understanding of the character of the new military technology was perhaps most widespread, there was a growing sentiment that a new kind of expert would be required to deal with war-prevention. The development of a suitable theory and a suitable armament went together; the theory would be as necessary as the technology if arms control procedures were to achieve their intended purposes. If nuclear war was to be avoided, precisely because such war would be destructive in ways scarcely imagined even by those who had known war in 1939-45, there was an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

obligation to learn new facts, develop new concepts, and create attitudes and policies appropriate to a new age. Americans took the lead in providing such instruction; by 1960, those familiar with nuclear military technology were prepared to share their knowledge and concerns with an audience like the one that had begun to read *Daedalus*.

Not surprisingly, many who believed these things insisted also that the issues were only in part technological and scientific. They argued, and developed theories to support their views, that new modes of negotiation between the great powers were essential. They created new theories about how the nuclear powers needed to comport themselves in respect to each other, what kinds of information each might find it desirable and useful to share and pass on to the other, why the old putative military advantages—surprise and secrecy—were fundamentally unsuited to diplomacy and international politics in the thermonuclear age. The authors in the 1960 issue of *Daedalus* did not go so far as to recommend the traditional religious injunction "to love thine enemy," but they insisted on close and constant communication with the Soviet Union, believing cooperation (on many levels) to be the keystone to peace. The United States, in effect, was encouraged to become tutor to the Soviet Union; American security, it was argued, would be enhanced if the Soviets become more proficient and knowledgeable in nuclear matters. The alternative, they believed, could be atomic disaster. This is not to suggest that those who argued in this way were wholly trusting of the Soviet Union; few believed such trust to be either desirable or necessary. In thinking about ways to control what each of the atomic powers developed militarily, the new "arms controllers" showed their faith in the possibility of inventing highly sophisticated technological and other procedures that would guarantee effective weapons inspection, that would detect and advertise violations of the arms control procedures agreed upon. Cheating would be wellnigh impossible. The development of such complex methods of detection and surveillance became a high-priority objective. If the Soviet Union came to know more about American military capabilities and intentions, and if Americans enjoyed the same knowledge about the Soviet Union, both would be deterred; the chances of peace would be vastly increased. Such was the belief of many who thought about these questions in 1960.

The invention of techniques and procedures to limit the growing expenditures on new weapons systems seemed important; more critical, perhaps, for many who wrote at this time, was the prospect that one side or the other would seek to gain a decisive military advantage; this was thought to be immensely dangerous; it could lead to an irrational act. If either adversary came to believe that quick victory was possible, that the risks of thermonuclear war were not as great as commonly believed, or need not be, at least for themselves and their fellow-citizens, the chances of war would be substantially increased. The new American doctrine insisted that the control of atomic armaments depended on mutual restraint, where the possibility of a decisive advantage was denied to both sides. The most hazardous moment would occur if either of the potential belligerents came to imagine that thermonuclear war was a rational alternative to the uneasy peace that prevailed.

No one doubted the immense difficulty of achieving the kinds of arms control accords that would indeed provide such "equivalence" or offer the "security" that was expected to go along with it. Still, given the general acceptance of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the new theory of deterrence, and given the belief in many parts of the world that the United States would not use its superior nuclear capabilities in an initial surprise strike on its Communist adversary, the possibilities and advantages of mutual restraint seemed reasonably clear. The challenge, of course, would be to translate into specific bilateral and multilateral accords the rational principles that theorists and others were inventing.

There were many other issues to be resolved. First, perhaps, was whether war in the future between the superpowers might be something other than thermonuclear war. If hostilities were to break out between the United States and the Soviet Union, was it at all conceivable that their forces would fight with conventional weapons only? What kinds of conventional military capabilities would the United States and its allies require to wage such a "limited" war? If thermonuclear arms provided the ultimate defense, why should one side or the other, confronted with the possibility of defeat, not use them. A good deal was written also about the need for tactical nuclear weapons, for arms smaller than those capable of destroying whole cities or of rendering entire military systems inoperable. Did the idea of a limited thermonuclear war have validity? In what circumstances? Would atomic weapons, once used, not lead inevitably to escalation and the all-out nuclear engagement that everyone feared? How, indeed, could planning for nuclear war be coordinated with planning also for conventional war? Did one not contradict the other?

All these questions derived from the realization that, although the United States had lost its nuclear monopoly irrevocably, a new kind of security could still be searched for and found. Those who had faith in arms control procedures imagined that security in the atomic age depended first on a willingness to negotiate, to acknowledge that the world was indeed dangerous and would for all time remain so, but that there was no reason to allow such danger to lead to war. A new understanding was required—not that demanded by idealists and others who relied on "good will" and moral virtue—but one grounded in technological knowledge, in self-interest, in the all-too-human wish to avoid unacceptable levels of death and destruction.

A new military vocabulary was invented; with it came a new vocabulary of arms control. The terms were new; the objective, however, was old—to keep the peace, and to accomplish this principally through negotiation about arms. Those who wrote in 1960 were little daunted by the difficulties of their task; its very scale and dimension seemed to whet their appetites for what many took to be an "intellectual adventure." Just as the new military technology was largely their own creation, or the creation of their scientific and engineering friends, colleagues, and associates, it was expected that the new peace-keeping procedures would be their own doing also. They would invent the testing and surveillance machinery that would give assurances to each side that the other was not cheating; they would provide also the military doctrine and the negotiating formulae that would inhibit the use of thermonuclear devices. In short, they expected to provide the intellectual and technological capital that would be used in major military planning, but also in all peace-keeping operations. In a dangerously bifurcated world, they saw themselves as the impartial ones, the true believers in both the possibility and necessity of universal peace. A more noble purpose, in the circumstances, could scarcely be conceived.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It would be wrong to imagine that those who wrote in 1960 were naive, that their optimism clouded their vision, or that their pride confused them about the limits of all human design. They were not simply men and women inexperienced in politics, who imagined that all would be easy. They wished to share their understanding; they imagined that others could be persuaded of the correctness of their point of view. Those who sat in the Kremlin were no more prepared to risk universal destruction, in their view, than those who advised the White House. They accepted the fact of Soviet power; they were, however, little frightened by it. They could see no way to control that power except through the novel procedures they recommended. They agreed that these were not the traditional ways of diplomacy; they believed, however, that they were suited to the times and that no others would serve equally well. Thermonuclear war frightened them; the Soviet Union was considerably less fearsome. The Soviets could be controlled, guided, and instructed; war in the new age would not be susceptible to the same or comparable limits. This was the common opinion, although never explicitly stated in this form, of those who wrote for *Daedalus* in 1960.

No similar consensus is to be found in either of the *Daedalus* volumes now being published. The mood of 1960—the self-confidence and sense of adventure—is gone, and with it the expectation that the period immediately ahead, though difficult, carries promise of substantial and significant arms control achievement. Why so dramatic a change between those who reflected on these issues in 1960 and those considering them today? Why, indeed, is there no celebration of the fact that there has been no war between the major powers—none at all between the superpowers—and that peace, however uneasy, has lasted for thirty-five years. Those who lived earlier in the century knew only an unstable truce that lasted two decades. In this, at least, their children and grandchildren have been considerably more fortunate. Why, then, the unease? Why, indeed, the sense of imminent danger? The answers are not easily given; they relate essentially to the fact that the continued massive build-up of Soviet armaments, coincident with the expansion of Soviet influence in certain parts of Africa and in the Middle East and the seeming growth of its influence and reputation elsewhere in the world, has made for a new wariness and concern. The achievement of nuclear parity has not produced many of the consequences originally anticipated. On the contrary; many would argue that it has served principally to whet Soviet ambition and assertiveness. This is by no means universally acknowledged, but even those who appear to be most dubious about such grandiose propositions are increasingly wary. Very few are prepared to assert categorically that the new Soviet thrusts are entirely explicable as the actions of a great power that is taking advantage, however cautiously, of the political and military weaknesses of others, principally the United States.

The Soviet Union, from the moment of its inception, has been the subject of international debate. In 1960, when interest in the West grew in the possibilities of negotiations, few thought to conceal whatever residual doubts they had about Soviet society and its leaders. The evolution of that society has always seemed problematical. The issue of how individual states ought to deal with the Soviet Union—how its purported anxieties and fears ought to be regarded, why certain kinds of gestures and agreements might be necessary and useful—these and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a hundred other like questions have long figured in all political discourse in the West. What makes the present anxiety different, however, is that there is now a diminished confidence in many quarters that the Soviets see the issues of thermonuclear war and peace in the way that many in the West imagined they did. Has new evidence been discovered to disabuse the West of its earlier beliefs? The answer depends on how one chooses to define the term *evidence*. We know as little about the decisions taken in the Politburo today as we did in 1960; there are as many theories about why Soviet troops are in Afghanistan at this time as there are political and economic interests in the West. The wildest explanations are given; a good number tell more about those offering the explanation than about the Soviets themselves. The fact is that no one in the West knows; all are guessing. However, in guessing, many are articulating very precise views on how the invasion ought to be regarded and how we need to react to it. When the chancellor of Germany worries publicly about whether we may not be experiencing 1914 again, his is a quite different concern and analysis from that which issues from the White House, where memories are shorter, and where the more common fear is that the alliance not repeat the mistakes Europe made in 1938. Soviet intentions are interpreted very differently in different parts of the world; it is simplistic to imagine that these differences are merely a function of whether the observer is an ostrich, who would rather not look at what is becoming increasingly obvious, or a lion, once deceived, who is now increasingly wary, very conscious of his prowess and his dignity.

In 1960 there were no specific events that created the rationale for the volume that *Daedalus* published. There was, in short, no analogue to either the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan or to the Iranian revolution and the hostage crisis. Those who announced themselves as "arms controllers" then were looking at a more general condition—essentially military—that they deemed exceedingly hazardous. They embarked on studies calculated principally to reduce those dangers.

Today the interest is quite different. It stems from a growing anxiety both in the United States and elsewhere—though some may wish to challenge a part of this statement—about Soviet military and diplomatic intentions. It derives also from a growing doubt about American capabilities, both political and military. In theory, the political weaknesses can be easily remedied; the elections in November provide at least the possibility of change. As for military weaknesses—for those who choose to dwell on them—all agree that they will not be rapidly overcome, and that the consequences of trying to do anything quickly are not at all clear.

The superpowers—the Soviet Union and the United States—are generally seen today to be erratic and unpredictable. One cannot be confident about what either will choose to do next. Their reactions to each other appear to be uncertain; it is difficult to know whether one or the other will show any interest soon in changing this situation, or how either will choose to announce its intent, and what it will then proceed to do. In a world of thermonuclear weapons, such uncertainty is itself unsettling, made all the more so by a growing doubt in many quarters that the ideas of deterrence, developed in a time of substantial American nuclear superiority, can survive in an age of nuclear parity. If this concept were no longer to seem credible, what other would take its place, and with what consequences, military and political?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

These issues alone go some distance in explaining the current mood, at least as evidenced in these two *Daedalus* volumes. They do not, however, tell the whole story. The most significant difference between these issues and the one published in 1960 may be the growing preoccupation with specific regions, most conspicuously, perhaps, the Middle East, but also Japan, Korea, China, the Caribbean, Central and South America. The earlier issue on "Arms Control," while including an essay on "the role of the smaller powers" and another on "the inclusion of Communist China in an arms-control program," never thought to make any regional interest—let alone regional conflict—seem a paramount concern. Yet, this is precisely what the current issues set out to do. Lest it be thought that this is simply following in the tradition of the late 1960s, where the need to pay attention to the smaller states and to their concerns—food, raw material prices, bank loans, development aid, and the like—it must be said that these scarcely figure in these pages. None of our authors pretends, in the manner of certain American academics and others in the late 1960s and early 1970s, to have in mind a new agenda of foreign policy issues to displace the items that have traditionally figured. No one argues that the old themes are obsolete, reflecting principally the limited view of an earlier and presumably less enlightened time. There is no such optimism here. Rather, there is the blunt assertion that the United States and its principal allies—industrial states enjoying high standards of living—are "hooked" on Middle Eastern oil; that there is no prospect of the "habit" being broken at an early date; and that this dependence is made all the more dangerous by the fact that the region is internally volatile, that new revolutions are always possible, that the Israeli-Arab differences remain largely unresolved, and that it is impossible to know what may happen in the region even during the next few years.

How the Soviet Union would react to certain kinds of events in this region, what the United States, alone or in concert with others, might choose to do, militarily or politically, remains immensely obscure. The differences between the United States and its principal allies with regard to Afghanistan and Iran have, in most instances, been papered over; the differences with these same states over Israel, the PLO, and plans for a Middle East settlement are not nearly so artfully concealed. There is every reason to expect these differences to grow. Given the specific political conditions that exist in the United States, which do not obtain in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, or Japan, the possibilities of greater stress within the alliance are good. For the moment, there is a general interest in keeping the rhetoric within bounds. What, however, would happen in time of emergency? What initiatives, indeed, may be taken in the coming years, by whom, and with what consequences?

How the military defense of this vital region can be conceived, let alone executed, taxes the imagination. The United States, in considering its defense options in the 1980s, is confronting conditions that are vaguely reminiscent of those that Britain experienced when she had an empire to protect east of Suez and vital interests in the Mediterranean, and knew how destabilizing certain political (and military) developments in the region could be. What polices are prudent in such circumstances? What negotiations need to be considered? With whom? With what purposes in mind? In a thermonuclear age when oil is a unique resource and there are no substitutes available, when an alliance of industrial states is wholly dependent on that resource, the prospect of conflict or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disorder in the region becomes frightening. The recent past, with its cheap energy, American nuclear superiority, and the eyes of the West largely riveted on an exposed city called Berlin seems almost an idyll by comparison.

If the hazards that attach to the Middle East are particularly preoccupying, it is well to be reminded also of American interests in other parts of the world where, again, in 1960 the United States seemed to enjoy either a privileged position—scarcely challenged—or where, for better or worse, Americans knew they could not much influence matters. Those who reflected on American defense interests in Asia in 1960, for example, would almost certainly have cited Japan and Korea as American "successes," Taiwan as something of a "success," and Communist China as a regrettable, but incontrovertible, American "failure." There were established policies for dealing with each; no one believed that these relations were likely to change very dramatically, or that there were imperative military, political, or economic reasons for changing them. A volume that set out to define American defense policy prospects in the 1960s would probably not have dwelled very much on the ambiguities of the situation in any of these countries. Indeed, such reflection would have seemed curiously out of place. The course in each place seemed to be set; the problems were elsewhere.

Such optimism is unthinkable in the 1980s. It is not so much the volatile character of certain of these societies that is preoccupying as the sense that these societies, in their relations with each other, with the United States, with the Soviet Union, will not necessarily pursue policies that are now common. Choices will be made, on this side of the water, certainly, but also on the other. Soviet activities in recent years cannot be isolated from these relations; to a lesser or greater extent, they are absolutely crucial in defining what those relations are, how they are evolving. The United States, obliged to make choices, will seek to maximize its advantages; none of its options is wholly free of hazard. In these circumstances, coming to know Japan, China, Taiwan, and Korea, not as myth would represent them, but as they are, becomes more than a desideratum; it is a vital necessity. The diplomatic road in this region may prove to be scarcely less treacherous than the one that will have to be traveled in Europe. Indeed, the two may prove to be more related than is now commonly perceived.

Finally, there is a consideration of a region closer to home, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. In 1960 Cuba seemed to be the "problem"; the rest of the continent was thought to spell "opportunity." The Alliance For Progress, much heralded by the young president who came into office in 1961, was expected to perpetuate and advance those policies that had been initiated in Franklin Roosevelt's "good neighbor" programs and that had been periodically and ritualistically alluded to from that time forward. In 1960, Cuba notwithstanding, there was no anticipation of serious danger to American interests in Latin America. The Bay of Pigs operation was justified, by some, certainly, as an attempt to remove a cancer that might otherwise in time spread throughout the whole Latin American body. Others, however, were more sanguine; they imagined that they were simply cutting away a growth that had become troublesome and increasingly obscene. The defeat was, of course, humiliating; few, however, thought that it reflected in a significant way on fundamental American military capability. No one rose up to argue that the United States was in danger, that something had to be done at once. Today, the situa-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion is greatly changed. Latin America, while clearly having avoided both Cuban and Soviet domination, is increasingly restive, less given to accepting American recommendations, let alone American demands. Security for the hemisphere remains a free gift, given by the American taxpayer, as Americans themselves once enjoyed protection from the British Navy, courtesy of the British taxpayer. Yet, in this country, as in the Caribbean and in Central and South America, there is a sense of things being not at all as they once were. The agenda for discussion is a new one; North Americans are not the only ones who are framing it; indeed, they are not the only ones who must be satisfied with it.

What, then, do all these individual regional studies suggest? That U.S. relations with the external world are more complex than they used to be, that the old forms of American domination and control are no longer conceivable? On the most primitive level, something of this sort is certainly implied. More important, perhaps, is the message that war and peace (particularly for the United States) can no longer be conceived primarily as an exercise involving principally the relations between the two superpowers. Those relations remain crucial; however, the old confidence in the American capacity to control, contain, and regulate (together with the Soviet Union) the vast new thermonuclear arsenals that exist is gone; with it has gone also the idea that arms control agreements will, of necessity, generate other agreements. It is not because other nations also have thermonuclear arms that the situation is so dangerous today; it is because they have interests—political, economic, strategic—different from those of the United States and different also from those of others, that makes conflict a possibility, one into which the United States could well be drawn. There are numerous contingencies that need to be prepared for.

Does this imply a downgrading of the importance of all those novel technological, diplomatic, and political procedures introduced earlier to reduce the risks of atomic war? Not at all. It implies only that all such concerns must coexist with many that are considerably more traditional. It is not enough to develop new concepts of military sufficiency, certainly not enough to know what "chips" may be used in bargaining to achieve certain kinds of arms control. Defense policy in the 1980s presumes another kind of understanding also, grounded in history, based on the capacity to analyze correctly the interests and intentions of many others, to anticipate what they may do, to know how to respond to such anticipated events, and also, no less significantly, to accident. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the international system today is immensely unstable and does not adjust rapidly or easily to even minor perturbations. There is good reason to be concerned about how events would proceed in a major crisis.

At a time when many in the United States are seriously worried by what they interpret as a growing provincialism and parochialism, when studies of foreign situations are not considered crucially important—less significant certainly than the more intractable domestic problems that cause so much commentary and concern—there is a desperate need to sound the alarm. The knowledge and understanding called for in this issue of *Daedalus* is significantly different from what seemed necessary at an earlier time when the United States had more reason to be self-confident, when it could be more arrogant in its beliefs concerning its own analytic and technological capabilities. Where the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new knowledge is to come from, how it will be generated and disseminated, is a major part of the problem. Internal American politics, which have become the nightmare of many who continue to profess friendship for the United States, cannot be relied on to encourage or permit the kinds of questioning that may now be called for. America's choices today are more limited; its uncertainties are more apparent. So, also, there is a new sense of vulnerability in the land, and this does not always generate rational, civil, or useful dialogue. It may not even encourage new thought.

If the United States in the 1980s is to prepare for the difficult circumstances and dangerous confrontations that will certainly occur, and if Soviet intentions and policies remain reasonably obscure, showing perhaps even more aggressive tendencies—and not only or principally in the military sphere—the elaboration of specific measures to thwart and contain such hazards becomes a matter of the highest priority. The intellectual effort required for these purposes is daunting; the difficulties of the 1980s are certain to be substantially greater than those of the 1960s. However, intellectual effort alone will not resolve this country's defense problems, let alone those of its allies and friends. Just as an earlier generation saw the necessity to think matters through anew—believing that thermonuclear weapons had created a new international order, with unprecedented opportunities and hazards—so, now, the American purpose must be to confront an uncertain future with moderation, even with sangfroid.

What, precisely, is called for? To begin with, a modicum of tolerance, not least for those who differ with the more fashionable of the contemporary political pieties. The differences that exist in respect to defense policy today do not derive simply from ignorance, cowardice, or self-interest. The arguments heard in Washington are also being expressed abroad. Many, however, have scarcely chosen to hear what is being said by those who do not share their own opinions. The passion of the moment—characteristic in this field as in so many others—is unbecoming a great democratic nation; it also happens to be counterproductive.

There is a great hazard in turning too sharply from the experience of these last twenty years. The indifference that the men of 1960 showed for those who had worked for arms control, disarmament, and peace in an earlier period had some slight excuse; they imagined themselves to be laboring in a new vineyard. This cannot be said in 1980 of those who have labored since 1960. There must be a substantial and continuing examination of the recent record; it can only have utility for those who are prepared to consult it. There must be hard and continuing criticism of all the conceptual schemes that only yesterday seemed so rational and persuasive. There must be equally hard criticism of the new recommendations, including those contained in this volume.

To plan America's defense policies in the 1980s requires a willingness to listen, not least to those abroad who believe they have an interest (indeed, a stake) in the matter. Provincialism is the prime enemy in matters relating to defense. It would be useful to consider what role limited vision has had in creating both the easy enthusiasms of the past and the possibly exaggerated despair of the present.

This is only the first of two *Daedalus* issues on the subject; the second will follow shortly. Together, these volumes are intended to suggest how the problems of defense are now perceived, what options are believed to exist, what

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hazards need to be taken into account, what innovations are now deemed appropriate. Many issues—America's relations with its European allies, the prospects for new arms control initiatives, the military technology that may prove significant in the coming decade—will be treated in the next *Daedalus* volume. This number needs to be read as the first of two.

Our special thanks go to the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for making these studies possible. They have been exemplary in providing encouragement for a venture that depended on bringing together individuals who would not ordinarily meet to discuss issues on which they knew themselves to be in fundamental disaccord. Civility in every instance won out over passion; many opinions were aired; some have found a place in these pages; still others will be found in the coming volume.

S.R.G.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RICHARD PIPES

Militarism and the Soviet State

> History suggests that peace is a breathing space for war.
>
> —V. I. Lenin[1]

THIS ESSAY DEALS WITH THE ROLE OF MILITARISM in the Soviet system. It seeks to indicate how deeply embedded militarism is in communist theory and practice and how broad is its scope. It is meant to counteract a notion widespread in the West that the Soviet Union, a country with a socialist ideology, acute internal problems, and a history of appalling losses from war, resorts to militarism reluctantly, out of fear of foreign invasions or encirclement. This view, in my opinion, is entirely erroneous. It rests on a superficial knowledge of Russian history as well as communist theory and practice, reflecting a more or less unconscious propensity of many Westerners to impose on Soviet Russia their own values and experiences. Militancy—that is, a commitment to violence and coercion—and its principal instrumentality, militarism, seem to me as central to Soviet communism as the pursuit of profit is to societies with market-oriented economies. This is so for sound reasons derived from Russian history, the ideology of communism, and the Soviet view of the nature of future war.

Historical Factors

Shortly before the outbreak of World War I, Sergei Witte, the retired prime minister, put down the following observation in his memoirs:

> In truth, what is it that has essentially upheld Russian statehood? Not only primarily, but exclusively the army. Who created the Russian Empire, transforming the semi-Asiatic Muscovite tsardom into the most influential, most dominant, grandest European power? Only the power of the army's bayonet. The world bowed not to our culture, not to our bureaucratized church, not to our wealth and prosperity. It bowed to our might.[2]

Witte's statement is correct in two related senses: the explicit one, that Russia historically has owed its international influence to the armed forces; and the inferential one, that in order to support an armed force of this power in a country with a weakly developed economy, Russia has had to devote an extraordinary quantity of human and material resources to military purposes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Because the study of Russia's past has never been integrated into secondary school or university courses on history taught in the West, most Westerners have an extremely sketchy knowledge of that country: exotic episodes (Catherine the Great, Rasputin), heroic tales of repelled invasions (Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky*), novels of the revolutionary underground (Dostoevsky's *The Possessed,* Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*) combine to produce the prevalent stereotypes. The English novelist Hugh Walpole was not far off the mark when he said that his countrymen were taught to see in the Russian "a blessed sort of Idiot unable to read or write but vitally conscious of God," and in Russia, "a land of snow, ikons, mushrooms and pilgrims."[3] Ignorance of Russia places Western statesmen at a great disadvantage vis-à-vis their Soviet counterparts, who, emerging from the background of an international revolutionary movement, have always had a keen interest in Western societies.

To a historian of Russia, the assertion that throughout its history this country had undergone an extraordinary number of foreign invasions and as a consequence developed a collective paranoia simply does not hold water. It is true, of course, that during their thousand-year-old history the Russians have suffered three especially devastating invasions: by the Mongol-Tatars in the thirteenth century, by the French and Prussians in 1812, and by the Nazis in 1941. But are the people who trot out these facts aware of the number of times that the Russians have invaded and inflicted comparable traumas on their neighbors? After all, a country does not become the largest state in the world, as Russia has been since the seventeenth century, merely by absorbing or repelling foreign invasions. How many, apart from specialists, know of Russian aggressions, such as the sixteenth century offensive in the East that resulted in the subjugation of the Muslim principalities of Kazan and Astrakhan, the conquest in the seventeenth century of Siberia, the continuous offensives against the Ottoman Empire and the partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century, the conquest of Turkestan and the seizures of Chinese territories in the nineteenth century? It is by means of this relentless movement outward that Russia has expanded until she came to occupy one sixth of the earth's land surface. To recall this record is not to attribute to the Russians uniquely aggressive proclivities; it is merely to correct a widespread misperception of them as a uniquely defense-minded people.

Russia's traditional expansionism and the militarism to which it gave rise were primarily caused by economic factors. The northern forest zone *(taiga)*, which was the homeland of Russians in the formative period of statehood (thirteenth to sixteenth centuries), is an inherently poor area with a substandard soil and an extremely brief agricultural season. Yields of grains here are low: Russian cereal crops have traditionally yielded three grains for each grain sown, a ratio one half to one third that obtained in Western Europe.[4] A prominent nineteenth century German geographer has estimated that the natural conditions in a region like northern Russia permitted, on the average, a population density of twenty-five inhabitants per square kilometer, whereas the countries of industrial Western Europe were able to support a density ten to thirty times as great.[5] It is in consequence of mounting population pressures, and the related tendency to cultivate the available soil to the point of exhaustion, that the Russian people have exerted constant pressure on their neighbors. In respect to external policy,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Russian history between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries was in large measure preoccupied with conquering the vast territories to the south and southeast of the *taiga*, lands covered with very fertile black-earth soil but inhabited by hostile Turkic tribes. Once this task had been completed, with the absorption in 1783 of the Khanate of the Crimea, the Russian state began to encroach on the lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. That conquered, it moved into the Balkans, Central Asia, and the Far East. But even this expansion was not sufficient, as on the eve of World War I one fourth of the Great Russian peasantry had no land to cultivate.

To carry out its conquests, Russia devoted a lion's share of its national wealth to military purposes. In Muscovy essentially the entire landed class served in the monarchy's armed forces, and a large proportion of the peasantry had to be enserfed to enable these servitors to bear arms. The national economy was mainly geared to warfare. Under Peter the Great, with the introduction of a standing army based on conscription (the first such force in Europe), the burden of militarism on society bore yet more heavily. The armed forces created by Peter required the nation to maintain three professional soldiers for every one hundred inhabitants—a ratio three times higher than was considered advisable at the time by the much richer countries of the West.[6] The burden was immense for a country as poor as Russia, and so it was no wonder that in some years virtually the entire national budget had to be turned over to the military. The Russian historian Kliuchevskii has shown convincingly that the reforms of Peter, which laid the foundations of modern Russia, had been dictated in the main by military exigencies.[7]

Space forbids discussion of the role of the military in post-Petrine Russia. Suffice is to say that, in order to maintain a credible military establishment, Imperial Russia had to continue to lavish a disproportionate amount of its resources on defense. It has been estimated that on the eve of World War I Russia's per capita national income was a mere $44, compared to England's $243, France's $185, and Germany's $146.[8] And yet, with only a fraction of West Europe's wealth at its disposal, the government had to spend on its military establishment sums fully comparable to those of the West. Indeed, because of its technical backwardness and the related slowness of mobilization, Russia had no choice but to maintain the largest standing army in the world. There is a tragedy in the vicious circle that permeates Russian history: poverty calls for conquests; conquests demand a large military establishment; a large military establishment saps the productive forces of the country, perpetuating poverty. In the entire history of Russia there was only one period—the late nineteenth century—when its government underfinanced the armed forces in an effort to balance the budget and build up the country's industries. As the experience of World War I was to show, however, the experiment proved unsuccessful, and it was not repeated by the successors to the tsars.

The military establishment provided one additional service to the Russian state, and that was political. Traditionally, in Russia the armed forces have been charged with the responsibility for ensuring internal order. Troops were regularly called upon to quell peasant unrest and urban rebellions. In times of widespread unrest army officers were given authority to impose martial law and sometimes to judge civilians and even sentence them to death by field courts.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Imperial armed forces strongly resented this role,[9] but it was crucial to the survival of the old regime: it was precisely the refusal on February 27, 1917, of units of the Petrograd garrison to fire at crowds milling in the streets in defiance of government orders that led the next day to the collapse of the Imperial government.

So much for the historical background. The communist state, although permeated with different ideas and aspirations, inherited the same land with the same traditions and many of the same problems: it would be surprising, therefore, had it entirely discarded that or any other legacy of Russia's past.

The Ideology of Marxism-Leninism

The doctrines of Marxism, especially after having been reworked by Lenin, are the product of the age of Darwinism. (Engels, it will be recalled, at his friend's graveside compared his accomplishments in the social sciences to those of Darwin in biology.) This is to say that Marxism is a theory permeated with the spirit of merciless conflict—and, therefore, violence and coercion—as a regulator of human affairs. In this respect it contrasts vividly with prevailing nineteenth century liberalism, in the eyes of which conflict, especially in the form of war, was inherently irrational.[10] Lenin, who entirely lacked Marx's admiration for the historic achievements of liberalism, intensified the militant element in the socialist doctrine: it is fair to say that he perceived all human relations in terms of confrontations and life-or-death struggles.

As a theory founded on the premise of economic determinism, Marxism-Leninism cannot view events in terms of "rational-irrational" behavior or in isolation from other historical factors. In its view, warfare is one of several manifestations of that class conflict that inheres in the system of private ownership of the means of production: that is, a particular expression of class war. In the Soviet political literature it is indeed common to have war treated as one feature of the global class struggle, and victory in war and revolution regarded, for all practical purposes, as interchangeable. One of the stated missions of the Soviet Army since the days of Khrushchev is to fulfill its "duty" to revolutionary movements abroad by rendering them assistance and support.[11] It would be a mistake to regard this line of argument as merely a rationalization of aggressive intentions (although this element is not entirely absent). It is a whole way of thinking that must be taken very seriously.

Neither Engels, who liked to think of himself as a military expert, nor Lenin ever took a moralizing attitude toward war. As Lenin liked to put it, "There are wars and wars," meaning just and unjust ones, the former being waged on behalf of the socialist ideal, the latter deriving from the unalterable nature of the capitalist mode of production.

The remarks of Engels on warfare under conditions of the capitalist-socialist conflict are of interest in this connection. Having studied the record of nineteenth century military encounters, especially the Civil War in the United States and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 in which the industrially more advanced parties had triumphed, Engels concluded that in modern times the decisive factor was not the quality of the armed forces but their economic-industrial base of support. Looking ahead, he predicted that a socialist army

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would be as different from those of the capitalist enemy as Napoleon's had been from the professional armies of the old regimes:

> The emancipation of the proletariat will also produce a special military expression, create a special, new method of waging war. *Cela est clair.* One can even now determine the material foundations of this new warfare. . . . The grandiose discoveries of Napoleon in the science of war cannot be done away with by a miracle. The new [proletarian] science of war must also be a necessary product of new social relations, as that created by the Revolution and Napoleon had been the necessary result of new relations produced by the Revolution. But as in the proletarian revolution the issue is not abolishing steam engines but multiplying them, so in the conduct of war the issue will be not to reduce the cohesion and mobility of the masses but to enhance them. The premise of Napoleon's war conduct was enhanced productive forces; the premise of all new perfection of the conduct of war must also lie in new productive forces.[12]

There is no way of telling whether Lenin read these particular remarks, but using the same methodology as Engels he arrived at identical conclusions. Close observation of the German performance in World War I, in which Germany had stood fast for four years against vastly superior enemy forces, persuaded Lenin of the immense advantages of total national mobilization—not only for war in the ordinary sense of the word, but also for class war, that is, revolution. In 1917 he asserted: "In contemporary war, as everyone knows, economic organization is of decisive importance."[13] The period of War Communism (1918-1921), in the course of which were laid the foundations of the communist state, represented a grandiose effort to mobilize and unite under a single management the entire human and material resources of the country for the purpose of waging war—both the Civil War then in progress and the projected long-term war against international capitalism.

Although for its own convenience the Soviet government began in the mid-1950s to attribute to Lenin the idea of peaceful coexistence between countries with different economic and social systems, Lenin in fact had never entertained such a notion. He was quite prepared out of deference to the "correlation of forces" to enter into a temporary armistice with the class enemy, but he never contemplated that the ultimate defeat of capitalism could be attained without its defeat on the field of battle. In March 1919 he was castigated by Karl Kautsky, the leader of the Second International, for maintaining a vast military establishment at a time when other countries were demobilizing. Lenin could have answered, of course, that his government had no alternative because it was in the midst of a civil war, but this was not how he chose to respond to the charge. Kautsky's words brought a smile to his lips, he said—"As if there was ever in history even one large revolution which was not connected with war. Of course not!" And then, in an uncharacteristic outburst of candor, Lenin articulated his vision of the future:

> We live not only in a state but also in a *system of governments* and the existence of the Soviet Republic alongside the imperialist states over the long run is unthinkable. In the end either the one or the other will triumph. And until that end will have arrived a series of the most terrible conflicts between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois governments is unavoidable. This means that the ruling class, the proletariat, if it only wishes to rule and shall do so, must demonstrate this also with its military organization.[14]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This view explains why, after it had won the Civil War and no longer faced any military threat, the Soviet government not only failed to disband its swollen armed forces, but entered into collaboration with the *Wehrmacht* also, conniving with it to circumvent the military restrictions placed on Germany by the Versailles Treaty. This collaboration, carried on for a while even after Hitler's advent to power, enabled the *Wehrmacht* to perfect the strategy and tactics of the blitzkrieg, for which the rest of humanity, and the Russians most of all, were later to pay such a heavy price. It also, however, materially assisted the Russians to prepare for the coming war.[15]

Next to its fundamental commitment to conflict and war as a means of resolving "class" differences, an essential ingredient of Soviet thinking about warfare is the importance it attaches to the economic factor. This idea, fundamental to Marxism-Leninism, has received reinforcement from the experience of World War I. The outstanding performance of Germany, the failures of Imperial Russia, as well as the literature published in the West subsequently on the lessons of the war, all have persuaded the Soviet leadership that in the future war, about whose advent they entertained no doubt, the critical factor would be industrial capability. In the early 1920s Soviet military specialists concluded that they had to prepare for a "war of machines." Accordingly, they formulated a variety of strategic and tactical doctrines for combat of this kind that displayed considerable originality as well as prescience.[16] Acceptance of this doctrine by the government, however, had its price: it meant that one began to view the country's economy as essentially a military resource. The older Russian military doctrine (that of Imperial Russia) had stressed the offensive spirit of the soldier as the greatest asset: in line with this thinking, the Imperial government not only took no steps to prepare the country's economy for the contingency of war, but even in the midst of the war carried out the mobilization of the home front half-heartedly, almost unwillingly. By contrast, because the Soviet doctrine emphasizes industrial productivity as the principal factor in victory, the Soviet regime has tended to subordinate its industrial plant to military requirements. One may say that, in the Soviet Union, militarism is not a by-product of industrialism, as had been the case, for example, in Wilhelmian or Nazi Germany, but, on the contrary, industrialism is a by-product of militarism.

To wage a "war of machines" the Red Army required the kind of equipment to which in the mid-1920s it had had no access. Commercial arrangements with several capitalist countries, notably Germany, provided it with a great deal of modern technology, considerably more than is generally realized;[17] still, no one could have reasonably expected to create an up-to-date armed force under conditions of heavy dependence on foreign suppliers.

There is much evidence, direct and circumstantial, to indicate that military considerations significantly influenced Stalin's decision to proceed with forced industrialization. First, there was the spurious "war scare" of 1927, when Stalin proclaimed out of the blue that the country was in danger of imminent attack by unspecified enemies. This campaign helped create an atmosphere propitious for the immense national effort required to launch the First Five Year Plan, if only by exposing its opponents, such as defenders of the millions of repressed peasants, to the charge of treason. Subsequently, in the discussions accompanying the preparations and implementation of the Plan, much attention was given to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its military implications. Thus, for instance, the resolutions of the 1927 Plenum of the Party demanded that, in the drafting of the Plan, "maximum" consideration be given to those branches of the economy that in the event of war would help defend the country and ensure its economic stability. K. E. Voroshilov, then the commissar for war, at the Sixteenth Party Congress held in 1930, accordingly emphasized the intimate connection between the industrialization drive then in progress and defense.[18] But even without these statements, which some may be inclined to dismiss as of primarily propagandistic intent, the military consequences of the First Five Year Plan were soon incontrovertibly in evidence. Beginning with 1930 the Red Army received a steady stream of equipment produced by Russia's new industrial plant: tanks and other motorized stock, heavy artillery as well as antiaircraft and antitank guns, all of which enabled Soviet generals to begin inserting in the midst of their primitive masses of infantry a solid core of mechanized units. In the opinion of some contemporary observers, thanks to this equipment, the Red Army became by 1935 the most modern in Europe.[19] At the same time, by having launched these preparations when no other country was rearming, the Soviet government must bear responsibility for setting off the great arms race of the interwar period.

From the point of view of our inquiry, the experience of World War II on the Eastern front had two significant consequences. First, it has reemphasized the supreme importance in modern warfare of the "home front." The Soviet Union was able in the end to defeat Germany because it had forestalled a collapse of the administration and kept the defense industries going under the most adverse conditions imaginable. Even when the front was near collapse under the German onslaught, the rear held, and the recollection of this experience has served to enhance in the mind of Soviet leaders the importance of the rear as a factor in warfare. The phenomenon loosely referred to in Soviet literature as "morale" eventually came to occupy a position second only to industrial might as an essential ingredient of victory.

Second, World War II had provided the first and so far only occasion in the history of the Soviet state when the government and the population at large cooperated in a genuine partnership to defeat an invader bent on destroying both communism and the Russian people. This bond, sealed in blood, has been an immense asset to the Soviet regime, to whom the lack of a credible claim to legitimacy has always given all manner of difficulties. Its abstract assertion of legitimacy, derived from communism's historic mission, has for most of its subjects far less reality than the legitimacy the Soviet regime actually earned for itself by organizing the country to repel the Nazis. This helps explain the government's insistence on keeping the memory of the "Great Patriotic War" alive among the population: even citizens thoroughly disaffected with the communist system cannot help to concede, however grudgingly, that the regime, whatever its faults, did save Russia. By making the regime's political appeal depend so heavily on war experience, this further encourages Soviet militarism.

The Soviet View of Contemporary Warfare

The brief survey of current Soviet military doctrine that follows is intended to convey how inextricably it is linked with nonmilitary factors—in other

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

words, how deeply and broadly Soviet peacetime thinking about victory in war touches every aspect of political, economic, and social life, and how intensely militaristic, as a consequence, is its outlook.

In the Soviet Union military doctrine is treated with utmost seriousness. A network of academies, which have no exact equivalent in the West, prepares cadres of high-ranking specialists in all the branches of warfare. The most prestigious of these is the Military Academy of the General Staff named after K. E. Voroshilov. One of the seven "higher" *(vysshee)* military academies, it enrolls generals and admirals: its two-year course concentrates on strategic and operational subjects.[20] Out of these and related institutions issues a steady stream of military publications that offer a comprehensive view of Soviet military doctrine—more comprehensive, at any rate, than the corresponding literature on the American side, where the plethora of nonauthoritative pronouncements must prove very confusing to Russian observers.[21]

To a Westerner, the most striking quality of current Soviet military doctrine is its comprehensiveness, that is, its tendency to reach far beyond the limits of what in the West is recognized as the proper province of military thought. This derives from the fact that Soviet theorists draw a basic distinction between what they call the "art of war" *(voennoe iskusstvo)* and the "science of war" *(voennaia nauka)*, the former of which is seen as the latter's central, but subordinate, element. The art of war—subdivided into strategy, the art of operations, and tactics—corresponds to military science as understood in the West. The Soviet science of war is defined as a discipline that "studies the laws of war reflecting the dependence of the war's progress and outcome on politics, economics, [and] the relationship of the moral-political, scientific-technological and military potential of the warring parties."[22] Thus formulated, the science of war investigates the subject that in the Western literature is known as "Grand Strategy." The concept "correlation of forces" *(sootnoshenie sil)* frequently used in Soviet literature relates to the science of war by assessing not only the balance of power narrowly conceived to include troops and weapons, but also the entire panoply of nonmilitary factors that come into play when a modern country wages war. In line with this distinction, Soviet writers disparage Western military thought on the grounds that it treats the art of war as identical with the science of war.[23]

As a consequence of this approach, embedded in Marxism-Leninism and strengthened by the memory of World War II, contemporary Soviet military doctrine places the economic and "moral" cohesion of the home front quite on par with the battle readiness of the military front. The armed forces must be prepared for combat long before the outbreak of hostilities, and so must be the civilian population. This mode of thinking, pushed to its logical conclusion, requires that the entire nation be kept in a state of readiness for war in peacetime, and that the line that in noncommunist societies separates the military from the civilian sectors be made much less distinct.

These considerations apply, of course, not only to defensive calculations, but also to offensive ones. Given the importance attached to industry, transport, communications, energy, and morale as factors that make for victory, Russian doctrine assigns urgent priority to strikes against these targets.

In this connection, nuclear weapons acquire particular relevance in Soviet thinking. In the West, horror of the consequences of nuclear warfare led early to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the emergence of a school of thought that assumed nuclear weapons could have no military utility other than as a deterrent. Accordingly, Western doctrine for nuclear weapons has laid heavy stress on arms limitations agreements. Although, obviously, American military planners have had to concern themselves with force levels, targeting, limited strikes, and all the other aspects of nuclear conflict as if it were a genuine possibility, the theoretical underpinnings of these calculations have been neither elaborate nor intellectually impressive. To this day, the dominant strain in Western thinking about nuclear weapons is that they are weapons *sui generis*, exempt from the accepted norms of military science. The function of the home front is essentially to serve as hostage.

This attitude emphatically does not prevail in the Soviet Union.[24] After a period of hesitation following their acquisition of the hydrogen bomb in the late 1950s, the Russian leadership decided that nuclear weapons were a fact of life that could not be wished away. Whereas in the West their unprecedented destructiveness has produced the conviction that they have no rational application in an offensive mode, in the Soviet Union, by contrast, it was concluded that this very same quality makes them the decisive weapons of modern warfare. The Strategic Rocket Forces, formed in the winter of 1959-60, have been the centerpiece of the Soviet armed forces ever since. (Incidentally, they comprise not only "strategic," i.e., intercontinental, missiles, but all nuclear weapons with a range of over 1,000 kilometers, a fact that underscores the basic difference in our and their attitudes to nuclear weapons in general, and to the concepts of "strategic" and "medium range," or theater weapons, in particular.)

In the view of the Soviet military, nuclear missiles have revolutionized warfare even more than gunpowder and firearms had done in their day; and yet, like the latter, they have not subverted warfare's permanently valid laws. Their innovation consists in the fact that these weapons make it possible to secure directly strategic objectives (the destruction of the enemy's ability to resist) that in the past had been attainable only as a result of a sequence of individual battles: in other words, they make it possible to gain strategic objectives first and to treat tactical operations as mopping-up activities. Concretely, missiles can be used to annihilate the enemy's rear by disorganizing the twin pillars of modern war, the military complex and public morale.[25] According to an authoritative Soviet manual, it is the great value of nuclear missiles that they enable the armed forces "more rapidly and effectively to realize the major part of the goals of war" by reversing what had been the traditional sequence of combat: "It is most probable that modern war may begin with the defeat of military and economic objects, and terminate with the destruction of the enemy's armed forces and his unconditional surrender."[26]

The ability of nuclear missiles to accomplish directly the mission of destroying the home front—in itself a precondition for the collapse of the enemy's armed forces—signifies in Soviet doctrine that, more than ever, intelligent preparation for the contingency of war requires that one's own "rear" be merged with the front.

I have traced the causes of the intense militarism prevailing in the Soviet Union, a country that, given the unique casualties it has suffered over the past sixty-six years of revolution and war, could be expected to be committed to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disarmament and pacifism. These reasons are partly economic and historical, partly ideological in nature.[27] I have also stressed that the philosophy of economic determinism, as reinforced by the experiences of World War I and World War II, has tended to erase in the consciousness of Soviet leaders the line separating the military and civilian sectors, with the civilian sector being increasingly regarded as an ancilla of the military.

The purpose of these observations is to suggest how much more complicated than generally assumed are such undertakings as arms limitations agreements and détente. For the United States to increase or reduce its military commitment means, essentially, either to raise or lower its defense expenditures. This is not the case in the Soviet Union, where militarism is embedded in historical traditions, in ideology, in the country's very political and economic structure. Here, significant changes in military commitment would involve alterations in every aspect of national life, indeed, in the system's "constitution." It is therefore quite illusory to expect that a mere reduction of U.S. defense appropriations or a freeze on certain weapon deployments will elicit a corresponding response from the Soviet Union. This fact has been amply demonstrated by the failure of détente, but it could have been forecast from an analysis of the Soviet system had such been undertaken when détente was first conceived.

Militarism is coercion on a mass scale: it is a denial of compromise on which all peaceful relations between individuals as well as societies must repose. To acquiesce to coercion, whether out of weakness or out of lack of will, is to confirm the basic premise of militarism and thereby to encourage it. Short of war—the ultimate test of coercive powers—the only effective way of frustrating coercions is to demonstrate one's willingness to stand up to the threat, that is, to persuade the military party that the application of force is not profitable. These observations may be trite, but then truth does not necessarily garb itself in innovative or highly complex theories.

In the case of the Soviet Union, dissuasion needs to be fashioned in terms that correspond to its own notions of "science of war" and "correlation of forces." It must challenge head-on the Soviet view of warfare in the age of strategic weapons as well as impress the Soviet High Command with our ability to meet its criteria of "politics, economics, [and] the relationship of the moral-political, scientific-technological and military potential of the warring parties." In other words, to neutralize Soviet militancy, the Western deterrent must coalesce into a Grand Strategy with operationally meaningful strategic capabilities as one of its components. "Web of interest," "unacceptable damage," and other such notions spun by Western theorists will not do in this context.

Thus thwarted, Soviet militarism may indeed be spurred on to even greater efforts: it is a risk that cannot be denied. But it is more likely that it will come under increased internal criticism as an unprofitable device for promoting national interests. Denial of success in the military competition probably will compel the Soviet government to turn inward, to confront its public opinion, and to start coping with its difficult internal problems. This end cannot be achieved, however, without a major and protracted effort: there simply are no cheap and easy ways to induce the Soviet government to alter its direction.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

REFERENCES

[1]*Sochineniia* [*Works*], 2d ed. (Moscow-Leningrad: 1935), vol. 22, p. 328.

[2]S. Iu. Vitte, *Vospominaniia* [*Memoirs*], vol. 2 (Moscow: 1960), p. 380. Witte himself was a staunch antimilitarist, which lends his words special significance.

[3]*Dark Forest* (New York: 1916), p. 17.

[4]See Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), pp. 5-12.

[5]Friedrich Ratzel, *Anthropogeographie*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: 1891), pp. 257-65. My figures represent a recalculation of Ratzel's, which are given in square leagues.

[6]Cf. G. N. Clark, *The Seventeenth Century*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 100.

[7]V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Peter the Great* (London: 1958).

[8]S. N. Prokopovich, in *Finansovoe polozhenie Rossii v gody pervoi mirovoi voiny (1914-1917)* [*The Financial Condition of Russia in World War I, 1914-1917*], A. L. Sidorov (ed.) (Moscow: 1960), p. 131.

[9]This topic is the subject of an unpublished doctoral dissertation by William Fuller, "Civil/Military Conflict in Imperial Russia, 1881-1914," Harvard University, 1980. The Soviet government, profiting from its predecessor's experience, has separated the military forces responsible for the maintenance of internal order into special units of KGB and border guards. These fully equipped forces number four to five hundred thousand, or more than one tenth of the Soviet military effectives.

[10]Even for a Social Darwinist like Herbert Spencer, warfare was "progressive" in the early phases of human history when it had served to eliminate the weak and "unfit," but it was no longer so in modern times when it diverted human labor and resources to the tasks of destruction: *Study of Sociology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), pp. 176-81.

[11]See, for example, I. S. Kardashev, *Internatsional'nyi dolg vooruzhonnykh sil SSSR* [The international duty of the Armed Forces of the USSR] (Moscow: Military Publishing House of the Ministry of Defense of the USSR, 1960).

[12]"*Bedingungen und Aussichten eines Krieges der Heiligen Allianz gegen ein revolutionäres Frankreich im Jahre 1852*," Karl Marx, Friedrich Engles, *Werke*, vol. 7 (Berlin: 1960), pp. 480-2.

[13]V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniia* [*Works*], 3d ed., vol. 21 (Moscow-Leningrad: 1932), p. 189.

[14]V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniia* [*Works*], 3d ed., vol. 24 (Moscow-Leningrad: 1932), p. 122.

[15]On this episode, see John Erickson, *The Soviet High Command* (London: 1962), pp. 144-63, 247-82.

[16]Erickson, *The Soviet High Command*, pp. 352-53 and passim. Skeptics who question the value of current Soviet publications on the prospects of nuclear war would do well to ponder that in the 1920s leading Soviet military theorists, among them Frunze and Tukhachevskii, published in open literature strategic and tactical recommendations that were in large measure implemented by the Red Army in World War II.

[17]This is the subject of Anthony Sutton's *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development*, vol. 1 (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1968).

[18]*Kommunisticheskaia Partiia Sovetskogo Soiuza v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov, 1898-1954*, 7th ed., vol. 2 (Moscow: 1953), p. 277; *16th s"ezd Vsesoiuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii (b): Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow-Leningrad: 1930), pp. 282-9.

[19]Max Werner, *The Military Strength of the Powers* (London: 1939), p. 40. John Erickson (*The Soviet High Command*, p. 326) in referring to the immediate effects of the First Five Year Plan on Soviet armed forces speaks of a "technical revolution."

[20]The remaining "higher military academies" are devoted to tactics, chemical warfare, artillery, transport, communications, and engineering. On them, see *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia* [The Soviet Military Encyclopedia], vol. 2 (Moscow: Military Publishing House of the Ministry of Defense of the USSR, 1976), pp. 172 ff. The ordinary military academies concentrate on more technical and tactical subjects.

[21]It is not uncommon to hear from Westerners unfamiliar with the Soviet system of government disparaging remarks about the value of Soviet publications on military doctrine. They assert that similar doctrinal pronouncements may be found in Western publications, and that even if it is conceded that such opinions are prevalent among the Soviet military, they do not necessarily reflect the views of the political leadership. In response it must be said that in the Soviet Union all publications, but especially those dealing with military matters, are most closely controlled by censorship: only authorized personnel can pronounce on matters of military strategy, and in that sense all published doctrine is authoritative, which, of course, is not the case in the West. As for the alleged distinction between the Soviet political and military establishments, this very notion constitutes an example of "mirror imaging." It is true that in some respects Soviet generals enjoy a great deal of independence, greater than their Western counterparts, in that they are fairly free from civilian supervision in *implementing* military plans. At the same time, in *formulating* military policies they are

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tightly controlled by the political authorities. The Soviet Council of Defense, headed by Brezhnev, who happens also to be a marshal of the Soviet Union (as is his minister of defense, Ustinov), directs the military mobilization of both civilian and military sectors of Soviet society. The Main Political Administration, a department of the Party's Central Committee (at present under A. E. Epishev) is an organ of party control over the armed forces (including censorship of military publications). It taxes the imagination how, under these circumstances, there could develop in the Soviet Union two distinct military doctrines.

[22]*Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 2, p. 184.

[23]S. N. Kozlov et al., *O sovetskoi voennoi nauke* [Of the Soviet science of war] (Moscow: Military Publishing House of the Ministry of Defense of the USSR, 1964), p. 67.

[24]My thoughts on this subject were spelled out in "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," *Commentary*, July 1977, pp. 21-34. Since the article was written, the U.S. government has made publicly available runs of the Soviet classified journal *Voennaia mysl' [Military thought]* that contains many articles on the subject of nuclear warfare. On the basis of these materials, Joseph Douglass and Amoretta Hoeber have written *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1979). This book, in my opinion, disposes once and for all of the notion that the Soviet military share the American view of nuclear weapons.

[25]"The power of nuclear weapons will be [N.B.] concentrated above all toward destruction of the military-economic potential, defeat of the groupings of armed forces, and undermining the morale of the population." Major General V. Zemskov, "Characteristic Features of Modern Wars and Possible Methods of Conducting Wars," *Voennaia mysl'*, no. 7 (July 1969), cited in Douglass and Hoeber, *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War*, p. 16.

[26]Kozlov, *O sovetskoi voennoi nauke*, pp. 338, 345. "Military objects" in the above citation can mean only the enemy's nuclear forces, given that they are contrasted with "armed," that is, conventional, forces. The statement thus implies a strategic first strike.

[27]This list does not, of course, exhaust the reasons for Soviet militarism, which should also include such factors as the absence of legitimacy on the part of that country's leadership and the noncompetitive quality of the Soviet economy. See Richard Pipes, "Soviet Global Strategy," *Commentary*, April 1980, pp. 31-39. And, of course, it goes without saying that the greater the Soviet military preponderance, the greater the temptation to rely on military threats and coercion; that is, militarism encourages more militarism, quite apart from other considerations.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DAVID HOLLOWAY

Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy

THE GROWTH OF SOVIET MILITARY POWER in the 1960s and 1970s has caused anxiety, alarm, and disillusionment in the West. Widely different interpretations of this military buildup have been advanced. Some have seen it as evidence of the Soviet Union's determination to achieve decisive military superiority over its adversaries and to extend its power and influence by means of military force. Others, more in sorrow than in anger, have viewed it as springing from a deep-seated sense of insecurity and a desire to defend Soviet interests against real or imagined dangers. The entry of Soviet combat troops into Afghanistan and the overthrow of the government in Kabul have not resolved Western disagreements about the sources of Soviet policy. Those who see that policy as inherently expansionist have taken the invasion of Afghanistan as confirmation of their views, while for those who see Soviet policy as rooted in anxiety, the intervention merely points to the depth of Soviet insecurity.

Soviet leaders have argued that increased Soviet military power contributes to better, more cooperative East-West relations by forcing Western governments to adopt a more "realistic" and less hostile approach to the Soviet Union. In Western eyes, however, the very growth of Soviet military power has cast doubt on the professed Soviet desire for better relations and on the Soviet interest in East-West cooperation. The Soviet action in Afghanistan has highlighted Western fears, while the Western response seems to contradict the Soviet view that greater Soviet power means better relations with the West.

The Afghan crisis has closed one chapter in East-West relations. The détente of the late 1960s and the 1970s appears to have run its course. Since the mid-1970s the prospects for further progress had diminished. But now the supporters of détente have to devote their energies to salvaging what was achieved rather than to pressing for a further easing of tensions. Whatever course East-West relations now take, Soviet military power will continue to pose difficult problems for Western governments. But the Soviet leaders too will face difficult decisions, inasmuch as the growth and exploitation of military power may make impossible those relations with the West they say they want. It remains important, therefore, to try to understand Soviet perspectives on military power and its contribution to political purposes.

The prospect of a major turnover in the Soviet leadership makes the issue of Soviet military power more urgent. The Brezhnev years have seen a steady decline in economic performance, alongside the steady growth of military pow-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

er. The new leadership may therefore find it extremely difficult to maintain a large defense effort, revive economic growth, and satisfy the consumer. A redefinition of priorities or a major reform of the system of economic planning and management could have repercussions on foreign policy. Indeed, the succession raises wide-ranging questions about the distribution of power in the Soviet Union, about the prospects for changes in policy, and about the effects of domestic problems on foreign and defense policy. All of these need to be considered in deciding what, if anything, Western governments can do to influence the choices the Soviet leaders make.

It is not surprising that Western disagreements about Soviet military policy have spilled over into controversy about the nature of the Soviet state. The one area of agreement is that Soviet military power has increased over the last twenty years, though even here major differences can be found in interpreting the significance of this increase. The divergencies of view both reflect and contribute to the lack of consensus that exists in the West, and in particular in the United States, on questions of defense policy. (Indeed, they may tell us more about American thinking than they do about Soviet policy.) The object of this essay is to throw light on Soviet military policy by exploring Soviet conceptions of security and military power, by analyzing the role and content of Soviet military doctrine, and by examining the effect of domestic factors on Soviet defense policy. The focus is not Soviet military power as such, for this has received constant examination, but the articulation of military power and political purpose, which is less often studied. The problems of analysis are immense and need no rehearsal here. But an understanding of Soviet policy requires that the military and political elements be taken together, for it is the relationship between the two that raises the most important questions.

Military Power and the Soviet State

There is a tendency in the West to see Soviet conceptions of security as fixed and monolithic. Soviet statements encourage this impression by stressing the continuity of policy, while the principles of democratic centralism lay down that once a policy is formulated no disagreement may be voiced. Western governments, on the other hand, like to portray each policy decision as marking a new departure, and this naturally helps to stimulate open disagreement. In fact, however, Soviet leaders have defined their security interests in different ways at different times, as military and political conditions have changed. Similarly, Soviet views of security are not monolithic, for differences in perspective can be identified in Soviet thinking.

Soviet conceptions of security are nonetheless rooted in a distinctive historical and cultural experience that continues to exert a strong influence on Soviet thinking about military power. Even the legacy of the prerevolutionary state, with its powerful military-bureaucratic apparatus, can still be discerned. War and the preparation for war provided a major stimulus for domestic reforms and gave the state a dominant role in economic development. Rivalry with more advanced powers imposed a heavy military burden on Russian society. The Russian state expanded by assimilating weak or unstable areas and subjugating

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them by military force. At the same time the great invasions of Russian territory helped to engender a deep sense of insecurity about threats from outside the state. Insecurity and expansion were not mutually exclusive, but mutually reinforcing.

When the Bolsheviks seized power, they did not anticipate this inheritance, for they expected revolution to sweep through Europe. While the initial seizure of power was accomplished quickly, its consolidation was opposed in a bitter civil war and by the intervention of the leading capitalist powers. The Bolsheviks were victorious, but with the failure of revolution in Europe, they faced the task of socialist construction without aid from more advanced socialist partners. The young, economically backward proletarian state stood alone in a world that it regarded with hostility and suspicion, sentiments that were reciprocated in full measure.

In these difficult conditions, the course the Soviet Union took under Stalin's leadership had far-reaching consequences for Soviet security. Socialism was to be constructed in one country; a rapid industrialization drive would enable the Soviet Union to "catch up and overtake" the advanced capitalist powers. The "defense of socialist achievements" would be secured by Soviet military power, supported by a strong industrial base.[1] Alongside economic autarky a kind of autarkic security was pursued. Soviet security was now to depend more on Soviet efforts than on political events elsewhere in the world. Non-Soviet Communist parties were transformed into instruments of Soviet foreign policy, helping to oppose anti-Soviet forces and trying to prevent them from uniting.

On June 22, 1941, the war for which the Soviet Union had long prepared began with an attack that took Stalin by surprise. The opening months proved disastrous as the German armies advanced to the outskirts of Moscow. The newly created Soviet industry provided the material basis for a triumphant, though very costly, victory. The moral basis of victory was provided by an intense patriotism that the party did its utmost to encourage. After the bitter social conflicts and repression of the 1930s, the war against Germany (the "Great Fatherland War") drew regime and people together in a common struggle.

Victory brought territorial gains that must have been inconceivable in the dark months after the German invasion. The Red Army's liberation of Eastern Europe from Nazism laid the foundation on which a socialist camp could be built. The Soviet Union no longer stood alone against the capitalist world. But in spite of the victorious outcome, the initial German attack left a profound mark on Soviet thinking about the prevention of war and the preparation for war. The attempt to prevent war through a combination of diplomacy and military power had failed; the Red Army had been caught unready for the German attack; the Soviet Union had suffered enormous losses of men, materiel, and territory in the first months of the war; victory had been achieved at a huge cost.

The very success of the Red Army in pushing the German armies back to Berlin created disputes with the Western allies, and these soon degenerated into the intense hostility of the Cold War. The Soviet Union had suffered a severe economic setback during the war, while its chief postwar adversary had emerged, if anything, stronger. The Soviet Union lagged in those new military

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

technologies, notably nuclear weapons, that had undergone rapid development during the war. The gains of victory were thus partially offset by Soviet economic and technological backwardness. The Soviet Union's ground forces in Europe provided it with a major advantage, but once again the imperative of "catch up and overtake" had to be obeyed if inferiority was to be avoided.[2]

At the end of the war Stalin launched major research and development programs (nuclear weapons, rockets, radar, and jet-engine technology) to make good the lags in military technology. By the mid-1950s the growing stockpile of nuclear weapons raised fundamental questions about the relationship of war to policy and about the appropriate structure for the armed forces in the nuclear age, questions that have preoccupied Soviet military thought ever since. The discussions of the 1950s led to the establishment of the Strategic Rocket Forces as a separate service in December 1959, and to a major reformulation of Soviet military doctrine, which now emphasized preparation for nuclear war.[3]

In an important sense, the Soviet "military buildup" (to use the common term) began in the years of the First Five Year Plan (1928-32). The Politbureau decreed in 1929 that the Red Army should have no fewer troops than its probable enemies in the main theatre of war, and should be stronger than the enemy in the decisive forms of armament—aircraft, artillery, and tanks.[4] But the current buildup has its origins in the transformation of the Soviet armed forces for nuclear warfare between 1954 and 1964. Khrushchev tried to substitute firepower for manpower and to cut the size of the armed forces, apparently with the aim of reducing, or at least limiting, the military burden. This policy met with considerable military opposition, which was strengthened by the international crises of the early 1960s and by the defense policy of the Kennedy Administration.

Khrushchev was finally unsuccessful, and it is from the defeat of his policy that the present buildup can be traced. His successors have eschewed his exclusive emphasis on nuclear war and have pursued a "balanced" force structure that would be ready for various contingencies. A determined effort brought strategic parity with the United States by the late 1960s (and parity remains the public Soviet description of the strategic balance). The ground forces have been expanded, in particular along the frontier with China, and have been steadily modernized. The air forces, too, have continued to receive more modern equipment. Soviet naval presence has extended throughout the world. The supply of arms and advisers to Third World countries has grown substantially. All this has amounted to a formidable accumulation of military power, not according to a blueprint, but through a series of interlocking decisions.

Military Power and Security

It is in the light of this experience that present policies should be viewed. Leading members of the Brezhnev Politbureau came to positions of some power during the 1930s, and this has had a marked influence on their approach to problems of military power. The creation of a strong industrial state, victory in the war with Germany, the attainment of strategic parity with the United States, and thirty-five years of peace since 1945—these are regarded by this generation as among its greatest achievements. It is in the creation of military

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

power that the Soviet Union has come closest to "catching up and overtaking" the advanced capitalist powers.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the present generation of leaders has come to see military power as one of the main guarantees of Soviet security and of the Soviet position in the world. Official Soviet thinking sees the world in terms of an irreconcilable conflict between socialism and capitalism; it is from this that the Soviet state derives its *raison d'être*. It is true that the Soviet concept of the "correlation of forces," which is used to analyze this conflict, does not place primary emphasis on military power. It is also true that Soviet history indicates that political, military, and economic elements are interwoven in Soviet conceptions of security. But the very success of the Soviet Union in creating military power means that the law of comparative advantage gives the military instrument a major role in Soviet external policies.

The Soviet Union conducts its relationship with the West from a position of military strength but economic weakness. It has used arms transfers and military advisers as major instruments of policy in Africa and Asia. In its relations with other socialist states, military power has also been an important factor. In Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the Soviet leaders used military force to prevent political setbacks, while the Soviet relationship with China has now acquired a crucial military dimension. From the point of view of Soviet security, the creation of a socialist camp has not been an unambiguous gain, and its cohesion has been maintained only by military force.

The Soviet use of military force must, however, be seen in perspective. Compared with American, British, and French forces, the Soviet armed forces have engaged in little combat since 1945 and have been used less actively as an instrument of policy. By and large, Soviet leaders have used military force circumspectly and have sought to avoid precipitating a major conflict with the West. The Soviet style of active military intervention has been to use overwhelming force as an earnest of political and military commitment in the hope of crushing resistance at once and establishing firm control quickly. This has been rather different from the American practice of intervening at a low level and raising the commitment as resistance is encountered. Yet it would be wrong to try to discover permanent rules of Soviet behavior, because the context in which the Soviet Union exercises its military power is changing. Since the Second World War the Soviet Union has moved from being a continental military power to being a global one, with a growing ability to project military power around the world. This extension of military power has been driven primarily by the desire to counter those threats that can be posed to the Soviet homeland from afar, but it has provided the basis for more active use of military force for limited political purposes.

The current Soviet military buildup began at a time when world politics had a clear bipolar structure, with the Soviet Union and the United States as the dominant powers. The growth of Soviet military power has certainly altered the relationship with the United States to the Soviet advantage. But since the 1950s new forces have emerged to transform the international system. Fissiparous tendencies, both East and West, have complicated international relations. By the late 1960s, when the Soviet Union attained strategic parity with the United States, Japan and the European Economic Community had become ma-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jor centers of economic power, while the Sino-Soviet conflict had degenerated into military confrontation. And the emergence of the new states of Asia and Africa has provided a new arena for East-West rivalry.

From the Soviet point of view (as from the American), the international environment has become more complex, presenting opportunities but also dangers. Soviet opportunities for the exploitation of military power have grown most notably in Africa and Asia, while the increased ability of the Soviet Union to project military power gives governments on those continents a choice of superpower patronage and protection in their internal and external relations. But it should not be supposed that the Soviet Union is always the initiator, or always the beneficiary, of anti-Western developments. To suppose this would be to impose a political perspective that is not always appropriate to a world that has moved away from a clear bipolar structure.[5]

The greatest danger for the Soviet Union is that the various centers of power in the world will combine against it. Elements of such a combination have been evident, motivated in large part by the desire to offset growing Soviet military power; in turn, this countervailing power has provided the Soviet leaders with further reasons for military forces. It is not clear, therefore, that the growth of military power has resulted in a commensurate increase in Soviet security. Of course it is not inevitable that other states will react by increasing their own forces: they may feel intimidated, or find that accommodation to Soviet interests is the appropriate response. But Soviet leaders are faced with some delicate judgments in assessing the political effects of their military policy.

In the nuclear age, military power cannot provide a sure guarantee of security. Because of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons, and because of the present impossibility of effective defense against ballistic missiles, each state's security is contingent, to a greater or lesser degree, on the actions of other states. For Soviet leaders, schooled in the Stalinist approach to security, this has proved particularly unsettling. Ballistic missile defense has been attractive to the Soviet leadership because it would mean that Soviet security did not depend, in the words of one Soviet general, on the "good will of the other side."[6] But in the absence of effective defense, such dependence does exist. Thus nuclear weapons have posed military and political problems for Soviet policy. These problems have been the central concern of Soviet military doctrine.

Military Doctrine

It was widely expected ten years ago that the strategic arms limitation talks would lead to a better mutual understanding of military doctrine by the United States and the Soviet Union, but it is not clear that this has happened. The earlier American view of Soviet military doctrine as backward and primitive has been replaced by a greater awareness of the distinctiveness of Soviet ideas. It is no longer widely believed that Soviet strategic conceptions must converge on the American. Indeed, a reverse influence can now be discerned in which Soviet writings have influenced American thinking about the prevention and conduct of nuclear war. It is undoubtedly healthy that Soviet thinking is no longer dismissed as unworthy of serious attention. But there are disagreements in the West about precisely what Soviet thinking is.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The most contentious issue in Western debates about the nature of Soviet military thinking is whether the Soviet Union believes that it can fight and win a nuclear war. It is argued by some commentators that Soviet doctrine—in particular, the commitment to the Clausewitzian view of war as a continuation of politics by violent means—shows that the Soviet leaders do hold to this belief and that they accept the practical consequences that follow from it. Others object, saying this is a misreading of Soviet doctrine, that the Soviet leaders accept that a relationship of mutual deterrence—in the sense of mutual vulnerability to devastating retaliatory strikes—exists between the superpowers and, further, that they accept this as the only practicable relationship with the United States at the present time.[7] The issue is not a simple one, for the evidence available to us is far from complete; nor, indeed, should we suppose that there is a monolithic Soviet view on this question.

The most convenient way to approach this issue is through an examination of the structure of Soviet military doctrine. Military doctrine is defined in the Soviet Union as the system of views that a state holds at a given time on "the purposes and character of a possible war, on the preparation of the country and the armed forces for it, and also on the methods of waging it."[8] Military doctrine, in the Soviet view, has two closely connected sides: the political (which is dominant) and the military-technical. The former sets out the political purposes and character of war and their implications for defense policy; the latter deals with the methods of waging war and the organization, equipment, and combat readiness of the armed forces. In practice, these two sides are not only connected, but overlap as well; yet the analytical distinction is important. Soviet use of the term "doctrine" is more restricted than the American; one does not find, for example, references to "naval doctrine." At the same time, however, it is also more general, because it merges with the principles that underlie Soviet foreign policy.

Stalin's death opened the way for discussion of the implications of nuclear weapons for military doctrine. In 1954 Malenkov declared that in the nuclear age world war would mean the end of world civilization. In saying this he was not being un-Marxist, for both Engels and Lenin had pointed to the possibility that weapons might be developed that would make war senseless.[9] But Malenkov was being less than astute in terms of the leadership politics of his day, and he was criticized for his outspokenness. At the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, however, Khrushchev announced that war between socialism and capitalism should no longer be considered "fatally inevitable." This was because there now existed a world socialist camp, and because the Soviet Union possessed the means to deal a "crushing rebuff" to any aggressor.[10] This was an important innovation, and one that has remained central to Soviet thinking. Growing Soviet power would make a world war less likely because it would give the Soviet Union an increasing ability to deter an attack on itself or its allies.

The political side of Soviet doctrine stresses the importance, and the possibility, of preventing a war between the socialist and capitalist powers. The military side attends to the question of waging such a war "if the imperialists should unleash it" (to use the standard Soviet qualification). Deterrence is a political rather than a military concept and receives almost no attention in the military press. The Soviet leaders have seen the prevention of war as something

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to be achieved by means of a "peace policy"—a foreign policy that seeks to reduce the risks of war—backed by military might. In the words of Marshal Ustinov, the present minister of defense, the basis of Soviet military doctrine lies in "the unity of the peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet state and its readiness to give the necessary rebuff to an aggressor."[11] No contradiction is seen between the prevention of war and the preparation for war: war can be prevented only by being prepared to wage it.

The Soviet conception of deterrence is thus different from the American, and is embedded in the notion of war prevention. Soviet doctrine has never accepted the principle of assured destruction as a guide to force planning. (It does not follow from this, however, that the Soviet leaders reject the existence of a relationship of mutual deterrence between the two superpowers.) One way to explore Soviet thinking about mutual deterrence is to examine the discussion of deterrence by an influential Soviet social scientist, Fyodor Burlatskii.[12] In his view, the strongest argument the advocates of nuclear deterrence have is that, in spite of international tension and crises, a third world war has been avoided. Burlatskii claims, however, that three different hypotheses can be advanced to explain this. First, war has been made senseless by the threat of mutual destruction or irreparable damage. Second, the creation of a bipolar international system after the Second World War led to a balance of power that made victory by one side over the other doubtful (or impossible). Third, the forces of peace have been stronger than the forces interested in unleashing thermonuclear war.

Each of these factors, writes Burlatskii, has played its part in preventing world war, but the third has been most important. While war may have become senseless in a technical sense, he argues, the important question is whether the "imperialist conquerors" take this into account; nuclear war may be senseless, but someone might start it nonetheless. War must be prevented not merely through the threat of mutual destruction, but by tackling the political conflict that might give rise to it. This is why the third factor is decisive for Burlatskii. By the relationship between the forces of war and the forces of peace, he means not only the balance of power within the bipolar system (with the Warsaw Pact naturally identified with the forces of peace); he has in mind also those political elements in the West that oppose a strengthening of NATO, as well as the nonaligned and anti-Western policies of the new states of the Third World.

Burlatskii's identification of the forces of peace is crude, but his overall argument is interesting. It reflects a widely held Soviet view that the relationship of mutual deterrence is not a foolproof mechanism for preventing war; in spite of the Soviet Union's best efforts, the catastrophe of nuclear war might occur. The true significance of the Clausewitzian view that war is the continuation of policy by other means is that the possibility of war has to be assessed in terms of the political conflict that might cause it, and not merely in terms of the balance of armaments between the two sides. Two consequences follow from this view. The first, which Burlatskii advocates, is the pursuit of radical moves to change the character of international relations. But the second is the course that Soviet policy has pursued more vigorously: preparation for the wars that might take place.

It should not be surprising that the Soviet approach to deterrence is different from the American, for deterrence, although founded on hard material facts, is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

essentially a psychological relationship and is therefore strongly influenced by cultural and historical factors. It is here that the Soviet experience—in particular, perhaps, the memory of June 22, 1941—bears on Soviet thinking about the prevention of nuclear war. At the end of his detailed study of the German attack, the Soviet historian Anfilov concludes, in the light of historical experience, that to prevent the West from unleashing a new world war it is essential not only to be vigilant and to maintain constant combat readiness, but also to mobilize political forces for peace.[13] In Soviet eyes, the prevention of war is not only a matter of the balance of military strength, but the object of a wider policy that embraces political elements as well.

The Development of Military Doctrine

It may be useful to explore the relationship between the military and political sides of doctrine by tracing briefly the development of that doctrine in the nuclear age. After Stalin's death the military press began to discuss the implication of nuclear weapons for the conduct of warfare. In 1957 the Ministry of Defense organized the first of a series of conferences on nuclear war. These were followed closely by the Party leadership and formed the basis of the new military doctrine that Khrushchev unveiled in January 1960.[14] The focus of the new doctrine was the possibility of war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO; in such a war the chief weapon would be nuclear-armed rockets. The Strategic Rocket Forces were now to form the main strike force of Soviet military power. Khrushchev's outline of the new doctrine was very general, and in the following years intensive debates took place on a number of unresolved issues—for example, would such a war be long or short? Were the ground forces essentially occupation forces that would move into enemy territory after a nuclear strike, or would they take a major part in actual combat? These discussions centered on the question of what a nuclear war would be like and how it should be waged.[15]

At the same time, the acquisition by the Soviet armed forces of growing numbers of nuclear weapons and long-range rockets raised the question of the relationship between military power and foreign policy. The thesis that war was not inevitable opened the way for much greater stress on peaceful coexistence between socialism and capitalism. It seemed also to offer the possibility of political gains for the Soviet Union. Soviet nuclear forces would help to deter the West from attacking the Soviet Union or its allies. They would also, Khrushchev hoped, make possible a more active foreign policy. Soviet priority in testing an ICBM and launching an artificial earth satellite seemed to confirm Khrushchev's belief that the correlation of forces was moving rapidly in the Soviet favor. His prognostications about attaining full communism by 1980 were matched by his optimistic expectation of making major foreign policy advances. In a series of crises in the late 1950s and early 1960s he tested the political possibilities of the new military relationship with the United States by attempting to use a presumed Soviet military advantage to win concessions from the West. These attempts proved unsuccessful and culminated in the debacle of the Cuban missile crisis.[16]

Khrushchev's successors introduced some important changes of emphasis in force structure and in the political exploitation of military power. In the debates

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about military strategy Khrushchev had sided with those who relegated conventional forces to a secondary role. This position was criticized for depriving Soviet military power of flexibility. Stress was now laid on the need to prepare to fight different kinds of war; in particular, since 1967 the possibility of a conventional campaign in Europe has been taken seriously. After Khrushchev's fall, the military buildup was greatly influenced by the effort to eradicate imbalances in the structure of the armed forces. Khrushchev's defense policy was also criticized for depriving Soviet foreign policy of flexibility, forcing it to choose between passivity and risky challenges to the West. In effect, his successors agreed with the taunt the Chinese had flung at him after the Cuban missile crisis, that his policy was a mixture of adventurism and "capitulationism."

The Brezhnev leadership inherited from Khrushchev a considerable inferiority in strategic forces. They rejected this as unacceptable on both military and political grounds and made strenuous efforts to catch up with the United States. By the late 1960s the attainment of parity with the United States and the prospect of intense competition in antiballistic missile systems—in which the Soviet Union might well fare worse—raised new questions of military policy; in particular, was mutual vulnerability the only possible relationship with the United States, or should the Soviet Union strive for a significant strategic superiority? At this time it seems to have been accepted by the Soviet military and political leaders alike that mutual deterrence—in the sense of mutual vulnerability to devastating retaliatory strikes—was an objective phenomenon.[17] While not altogether happy with this relationship, they saw it as preferable to American superiority and as satisfactory insofar as an American attack was thereby deterred. It was accepted further that strategic arms competition did contain an action-reaction element, and that any attempt to achieve a decisive superiority would provoke a countervailing action from the other side. In other words, the choice the Soviet leaders faced was not one between parity and superiority (for superiority is clearly desirable), but between parity and a dangerous competition for superiority, the outcome of which was by no means certain. It made sense, therefore, to enter negotiations with the United States to stabilize the strategic relationship. The SALT agreements have not, of course, halted strategic arms competition, but they appear to have confirmed, in Soviet eyes, the correctness of the Soviet position. In the mid-1970s Soviet doctrine came to state more explicitly that superiority was not the goal of Soviet policy.[18]

This conception of the strategic relationship was one of the underpinnings of the peace program adopted at the Twenty-fourth Party Congress in 1971. Soviet thinking has not conceived of mutual deterrence as a sure mechanism for preventing world war. If mutual deterrence was to be accepted as an objective fact, then further measures had to be taken to reduce the risk of war, and this was one of the aims of the Soviet peace program. At the same time, the Soviet leaders believed that growing Soviet military power would help to make Western governments adopt a more accommodating attitude to Soviet interests. Détente, while helping to reduce the risk of war, would also provide a framework in which Soviet interests could be pursued and Soviet influence extended. Perhaps the most important gain for the Soviet Union in this period has been the international recognition of the postwar status quo in Europe.

One consequence of the acceptance of strategic parity has been that more attention has been given to the use of military power as an instrument of policy

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

below the strategic level. Parity had helped to neutralize American strategic power; more strenuous efforts could now be made to restrict Western and Chinese power and influence outside the central military balances. The Soviet Union's move to a global military role was in the first instance motivated by the desire to counter American strategic power. But through the supply of arms and military advisers, and with the help of proxy forces such as the Cuban troops, the Soviet Union has increasingly tried to use its military power to support political change to its own advantage around the world. It is as if the Soviet Union, having achieved recognition of its superpower status at the strategic level, now wished to play a superpower's military role in shaping the destiny of the countries of the Third World.[19]

Doctrine and Policy

Soviet writings about the conduct of nuclear war should be approached with the political as well as the military side of doctrine in mind. Those who draw from such writings the conclusion that the Soviet leaders think they can fight and win a nuclear war fail to relate them to the political side of Soviet military doctrine. The widespread Soviet acceptance of the position that war is a continuation of policy by other means does not suggest that nuclear war is regarded as an effective instrument of policy. Soviet writers are careful to distinguish between the nature of war and the expediency of initiating a particular conflict. Nor do Soviet statements about the possibility of victory in nuclear war necessarily indicate that such a war is regarded as an instrument of practical policy. If deterrence is not seen as foolproof, it makes sense to pay attention to how a nuclear war would be fought and how the survival of the state could best be assured in the event of such a war. In this context, victory retains significance as a concept: it is certainly to be striven for if war does break out; it is important for maintaining the morale of the armed forces; it seems to be entailed by the ideological notion that socialism must triumph over capitalism—for war cannot be thought of as reversing the movement of history. But Soviet writers stress the unprecedented destruction that would follow from a general nuclear war. There is little evidence to suggest that the Soviet leaders think victory in the present circumstances would be anything other than catastrophic.[20]

The relationship between the political and military sides of Soviet doctrine has not always been easy or unambiguous. Some members of the Party leadership have wondered whether, if war with the West could be avoided, the costly preparation for such a war was necessary; they have also doubted whether it made sense to speak of victory in such a war. Malenkov in the early 1950s and Khrushchev in the early 1960s appear to have had doubts of this kind and to have advocated something akin to a policy of minimum deterrence. Members of the High Command, on the other hand, have taken seriously their responsibility to prepare to wage war and have pressed for the means with which to do so. Whatever disagreements they may have had about the forces required for waging a nuclear war, they seem to have been agreed that such a war should be prepared for.[21]

The present position appears to be something of a compromise. It seems to be accepted that, in present circumstances, parity is the best possible relationship with the United States; the pursuit of a significant superiority would be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

risky and dangerous. But Soviet doctrine has not abandoned the principle that war should be prepared for: the military-technical side of doctrine attends to the question of how war is to be waged. Within the relationship of parity, efforts have been made to enhance Soviet strategic capabilities and to limit, through such measures as civil defense, the damage that a nuclear strike would inflict on Soviet society. At the same time, research and development work on new ABM technologies suggests that vulnerability is not seen as something immutable, and a technological breakthrough in this area might lead to a revision of doctrine. The Soviet view that war should be prepared for has a bearing on Soviet negotiating behavior at SALT, for the details of the agreements may have considerable significance for Soviet fighting capabilities. It also has a bearing on the strategic relationship with the United States, for Soviet measures to enhance their own capabilities appear to the West to be eroding the balance of mutual deterrence.

The closest Soviet doctrine comes to providing a criterion of sufficiency is in its statement that superiority in armaments is not the goal of Soviet policy.[22] Part of the reason for the adoption of this criterion is the fear that a drive for superiority will provoke countervailing action by other powers. But what does it mean to eschew superiority? What precise meaning is to be given to terms such as "parity" and "equality"—equality with all potential enemies or just with the United States? In the absence of an agreed strategic calculus, how is a judgment to be made about what will provoke a justified—as opposed to an "artificial"—reaction from the other side?

These questions are not posed to suggest that doctrine is of no importance either in making Soviet policy or in understanding it. But doctrine is not regarded in the Soviet Union as the key to specific decisions, nor should it be seen by outside observers as the key to understanding Soviet policy. Doctrine does provide a framework for the formulation of policy, but it does not determine the outcome of the policy-making process. Moreover, the framework of doctrine has evolved in response to changes in the military-political environment. It was reformulated for the rocket-nuclear age, and has been adapted since then to meet the realities and exploit the opportunities of changing military relationships in the world. More important, Soviet doctrine is not monolithic. Within its framework, substantial ambiguities, crosscurrents, and differences of emphasis may be found. Stress can be put on the preparation for war or on the pursuit of political measures to prevent it; on the possibility of victory or on the destructiveness of nuclear war; on the offensive political uses of military power or on the need for accommodation with the West. Variation can be found in Soviet writings, and this presumably reflects divergencies of opinion inside the Soviet Union. Thus one should beware of imputing to Soviet leaders a single undifferentiated view on these profoundly important matters. And, although doctrine is an important guide to Soviet thinking and Soviet intentions, one cannot move directly from a reading of Soviet doctrine to conclusions about policy.

The Making of Policy

The possibility of major shifts in Soviet policy has been one of the most contentious issues in Western debates about the Soviet Union. Some have ar-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gued that under the post-Brezhnev leadership policy will continue much as before, either because major changes are systemically impossible, or because policy has been based on a consensus rooted in the Party-State apparatus. Others have argued that the pressures for major changes in policy are very powerful, and that the Soviet system possesses the capacity to meet new challenges of the kind, for example, posed by declining economic performance. These issues are far too large to examine in detail here, but they are obviously relevant to Soviet defense policy in the 1980s.

In order to assess the possibility of a shift of resources away from defense, it is important to understand the position of the defense sector in the Soviet system. Since the years of the First Five Year Plan, Soviet leaders have given high priority to the creation of military power, and this priority has become institutionalized in the structure of the Soviet state. The defense sector has enjoyed a privileged position in the economy, not merely in the allocation of resources, but also in its institutional arrangements, which are designed to shield it from shortcomings elsewhere in the economy. The organization of the defense sector has a marked influence on the patterns of Soviet weapons development and production: institutional stability in military research and development appears to generate pressure for follow-on systems; defense production is less prone than American to the "feast or famine" syndrome. The defense sector shows signs of a strong bureaucratic momentum.

The high priority given to defense is embedded not only in Soviet institutions, but also in Soviet political culture. The military burden is heavy, but the legitimacy of the defense effort appears to be high. The armed forces stand as a symbol of national power and integrity. This symbolic appeal is strengthened by the very extensive "military-patriotic education" that the Party conducts. This does not glorify war in the fascist manner, but it does cultivate patriotic sentiments and military virtues and helps to foster the respect and esteem that the armed forces appear to enjoy. This provides a favorable context in which to continue a high level of military effort.[23]

Just as the military-political nexus is central to Soviet doctrine, so is the relationship between the Party leadership and the High Command a key factor in defense policy-making. There have been strains and tensions in this relationship, but it should not be seen as fundamentally one of conflict. Although some of the mechanisms of Party control have been criticized, the principle of Party supremacy has never seriously been challenged. There have been disagreements about defense policy, but in no case do these appear to have taken the form of a clash between the High Command on the one side and the Party leadership on the other.[24] The Soviet state has been so much influenced by war and the preparation for war that it is wrong to see the military as the driving force of defense policy.

While the principle of Party supremacy is assured—and is reflected in the structure of the central decision-making bodies—the Party leaders do not appear to exercise the kind of detailed control over military decisions that Stalin, for example, enjoyed. There are two main reasons for this. One is the sheer complexity of the decisions, which makes it extremely difficult for political leaders to control all aspects of policy. The other is the diffusion of power that has taken place at the center since Stalin's death. In the Soviet Union this has been

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

described as a move toward a more scientific form of policy-making, in which the claims of professional expertise and special competence are recognized.

The armed forces have been well placed to take advantage of this shift of power. In the various leadership struggles since Stalin's death, members of the High Command have proved useful allies whom no cautious Party leader would antagonize unnecessarily. The Ministry of Defense and the General Staff are institutions of undoubted competence and have a monopoly of expertise in the military field; there is, for example, no Central Committee department to monitor the military activities of the Ministry or the General Staff. Moreover, the details of military policy are shrouded in secrecy, so that discussion of specific decisions will be restricted to a very narrow circle. Even the size of military expenditure is kept secret, and this helps to fend off claims from civilian ministries for scarce resources.

For all of these reasons there is a very strong military influence on the formulation of defense policy, and this is likely to have an effect on the practical meaning given to such concepts as parity and equality. When the Party leaders make decisions about Soviet weapons programs, they presumably receive briefings from the General Staff about the military balance and the need for the new systems. The scanty evidence available suggests that the presentation of the threat will be made—naturally enough—in a way that supports the requirements for the new weapons.[25] The secrecy that surrounds the Soviet defense effort will make it extremely difficult for anyone to challenge the General Staff case. Thus the details of the policy-making process can affect the way in which doctrine is translated into practice. One result of this is that fears expressed by foreign governments about Soviet armaments policies will be seen by the Soviet leadership as artificially concocted for political reasons. As a consequence, the military balance becomes an object of manipulation both in domestic policy-making and in relations with other states; the arguments about the significance of the SS-20 for the military balance in Europe show how the definition of the balance can be a major source of disagreement in international politics.

One military writer has argued that only the armed forces' own research institutes can make political and diplomatic evaluations of new systems.[26] It is, of course, always open to the Politbureau to call on the advice of outside experts, but there is no evidence that this is done in making judgments about the political or arms control impacts of new weapons. It seems unlikely that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the policy-oriented institutes of the Academy of Sciences have a say in major decisions, even though they might be particularly interested in the political effects of the deployment of a system such as the SS-20 IRBM. Secrecy also makes it difficult for foreign governments to influence the acquisition of specific weapons. It is usually only when testing begins that it becomes clear what the characteristics of the new systems are, and by that time the development may have acquired considerable momentum. This secrecy has the advantage, from the Soviet point of view, of reducing political pressures on defense policy, but it also carries the disadvantage that the political repercussions on other governments may be difficult to foresee and control.

Although the priority given to the military effort is embedded in the political and economic system, it would be a mistake to see the militarization of Soviet society as absolute. The legacy of Russian and Soviet history is not uniform;

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even today there exist many different political currents inside the Soviet Union, and the diversity is very wide if the views of contemporary dissidents are taken into account. Moreover, in looking at Russian and Soviet history one can see its contingent character and the openness of choices at critical junctures—between 1905 and 1914, in 1917, in the 1920s, and even in the 1950s, for example. Further, the militarization of Soviet society is a relative, not an absolute, phenomenon—a matter of more or less, not of either/or.[27]

The Soviet Union does face problems other than those of military policy. There has been a slow, but steady, decline in economic performance, and this has provoked intense debates about economic reform in the post-Stalin period. With the abandonment of terror as an instrument of rule, the Party leaders have had to search for new sources of legitimacy for the state. Greater effort has been made to secure popular support—for example, through the provision of better goods and services to the population. As a result, the priorities of resource allocation have become more complex than they were under Stalin. For these reasons, it is argued by some observers, economic pressures will eventually force a diversion of resources away from the military effort.

It is indeed true that the military burden is heavy and that there are many pressing needs toward which resources might be directed. Besides, leadership succession offers the opportunity for various political forces to come into play, and for the formulation of new political strategies. Some commentators have suggested that we might witness a new industrialization debate, comparable in significance to that which took place in the 1920s.[28] This might lead to a shift of resources away from defense to a more eager search for accommodation with the West. Such a possibility should certainly not be ruled out, although Party leaders who wished to reorder priorities in a significant way would encounter opposition from the High Command and from the defense sector, as well as from inside the Party itself.

But there is another possibility that should be noted: that the armed forces and the defense sector will be used to help solve the problems outlined above. This, in fact, is already happening. The armed forces perform important social and political functions: military service is seen to have a major socializing effect on young men and to help in bringing the different national groups closer together; through extensive "military-patriotic education" the Party seeks to tap the deep patriotism of the Soviet people as a source of legitimacy. In the economy, the defense sector has served as the model for recent reforms, now that the prospect of a shift toward some form of market socialism has effectively been abandoned. This is an ambiguous development, for while it indicates the leading role of the defense sector in the economy, it also points to an awareness of the need for reform. It is not clear whether this line of reform will be successful. Nor is it clear what its political implications are. It might accompany marginal shifts of resources away from defense; or it might help to strengthen the political weight of the defense sector and enhance the priority of defense expenditure.

I have tried in this paper to examine the relationship between military power and political purpose in Soviet policy. The subject is a complex one, and it has been possible to touch on only some aspects of it here. I looked at the role given

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to military power in Soviet foreign policy and suggested that the emphasis placed on it is a consequence not only of the Russian and Soviet experience, but also of the international context of Soviet development. Moreover, I argued that the relationship between military power and foreign policy was a complex one in which the contribution of military power to foreign policy changed over time.

These complexities and changes are registered by the development of Soviet military doctrine. The military-technical side of Soviet doctrine, which has received considerable attention in the West in recent years, reveals how seriously the Soviet Union takes the possibility of nuclear war. But Soviet military doctrine can be properly understood only if its political and military side are examined in relation to each other. Only in this light can Soviet thinking on deterrence and the possibility of nuclear war be understood. Moreover (although I have not been able to argue the point here), if Soviet doctrine is viewed in this way, the differences between Soviet and American thinking are seen to be smaller than many writers have portrayed them.[29]

The fact that Soviet doctrine has changed is important, for it indicates that one should not take an "essentialist" view of Soviet policy, seeing it as springing from some innate characteristic of Russian culture or the Soviet system, impervious to phenomena in the real world. The development of Soviet doctrine suggests that Soviet policy involves a learning process, while the apparent existence of divergent thinking in the Soviet Union suggests that the process of learning has not stopped. Of course, what the Soviet Union is learning may very well be contrary to Western interests. But the point to note here is that an essentialist view of Soviet policy has, at its worst, two profound practical consequences: first, it means that one does not have to listen to what the Soviet Union says, because one knows essentially what it is trying to do; second, one does not have to heed the effect of one's own actions on the Soviet Union, because Soviet policy remains essentially the same.[30]

This is not to deny that Soviet conceptions of security and attitudes to military power are strongly influenced by Russian and Soviet history and by the internal structure of the Soviet state. But this influence is neither so strong nor so uniform as to inhibit all change. At the same time, however, these elements do make it difficult for Western governments to exert remote and precise pressure on Soviet military decisions: the policy-making process is largely closed to outside influence. Soviet policy has indeed reacted to Western policies, but not always in the way Western governments have wished. Foreign actions are refracted through the Soviet policy-making process, in which Soviet perceptions, military doctrine, foreign policy objectives, and domestic influences and constraints come into play. Moreover, the Soviet policy-making process appears to be rather inflexible; consequently, its ability to respond rapidly to external initiatives may not be very great. Western policy, to be effective, will have to be consistent and long-term. All this helps to make dealing with the Soviet Union very difficult. But it does not make it impossible.

All the indications are that the Soviet Union's security environment will become more complex as the 1980s progress. What course a new leadership will take is impossible to predict. It might adopt a more flexible policy to prevent that combination of its adversaries that appears to be one of the chief Soviet

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

anxieties or to devote its energies to internal problems. It might adopt a more belligerent policy, seeking to use the military power it has accumulated, relying on that military power to ward off danger. Domestic problems, coupled with tighter control and more fervent nationalism at home, might even push the Soviet leaders in this direction. One thing seems certain, however; no Soviet leadership would willingly give up the gains in military power that the Soviet Union has made, at considerable cost, in the 1960s and 1970s. At best, it might be more accommodating in the effort to stabilize existing relationships. Western governments, if they seek such accommodation, should not foreclose its possibility through their own actions or through a breakdown in political communication with the Soviet Union.

References

[1]On this period, see Julian Cooper, *Defence Production and the Soviet Economy, 1929-41*, CREES Discussion Paper, University of Birmingham, 1976.

[2]See, for example, Molotov's speech of February 6, 1946, in V. M. Molotov, *Problems of Foreign Policy* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1949), pp. 31-32.

[3]For Khrushchev's speech, see *Zasedaniya Verkhovnogo Sovyeta SSSR pyatogo sozyva (chetvyortaya sessiya). Stenograficheskii otchet.* (Moscow: Izdanie Verkhovnogo Sovyeta SSSR, 1960), pp. 10-59.

[4]*Istoriya vtoroi mirovoi voiny 1939-1945*, vol. 1, (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1973), p. 258.

[5]Robert Legvold, "The Super Rivals: Conflict in the Third World," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1979.

[6]Major General N. Talenskii, "Anti-Missile Systems and Disarmament," *International Affairs*, no. 10 (1964): 18.

[7]The most notable proponent of the first view has been Richard Pipes, in "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," *Commentary*, July 1977; for the second view, see Raymond L. Garthoff, "Mutual Deterrence and Strategic Arms Limitation in Soviet Policy," *International Security*, Summer 1978; and Robert L. Arnett, "Soviet Attitudes towards Nuclear War: Do They Really Think They Can Win?" *Journal of Strategic Studies*, September 1979.

[8]*Sovyetskaya Voennaya Entsiklopedia*, vol. 3 (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1977), p. 225.

[9]F. Burlatskii and A. Galkin, *Sotsiologiya. Politika. Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* (Moscow: Izd. "Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya," 1974), p. 287.

[10]*XX s"yezd KPSS: stenograficheskii otchet* vol. 1, Gospolitizdat, 1956, pp. 36-38.

[11]D. F. Ustinov, *Izbrannye rechi i stat'i* (Moscow: Izd. politicheskoi literatury, 1979), p. 329; this is taken from an article originally published in *Kommunist*, no. 3 (1977).

[12]Burlatskii and Galkin, *Sotsiologiya. Politika.*, pp. 286-8. This part of the study was written by Burlatskii and has been published in English, in Fyodor Burlatskii, *The Modern State and Politics* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978). Burlatskii has been a consultant to the Central Committee. But I am examining his discussion here not because he may be, or have been, influential, but because it seems to me to throw light on Soviet thinking about deterrence.

[13]V. A. Anfilov, *Bessmertnyi Podvig* (Moscow: Izd. "Nauka," 1971), p. 532. This, of course, is relevant to the current Soviet anxiety about encirclement. On this point, see also Raymond L. Garthoff, "Soviet Views on the Interrelation of Diplomacy and Military Strategy," *Political Science Quarterly*, Fall 1979, especially p. 400.

[14]For the speech, see Ref. 3; on the background, see *50 let Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968), p. 521; and Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1979), p. 41.

[15]On these debates, see especially Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1964).

[16]Herbert S. Dinerstein, *The Making of a Missile Crisis. October 1962* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976). From his study of the years leading up to the crisis, Dinerstein concludes that in Soviet-U.S. relations "the most grievous wounds have been self-inflicted. Exaggerated fears or misplaced confidence have produced a veritable catalogue of disasters" (p. 238).

[17]On this, see especially the article by Garthoff cited in Ref. 7.

[18]The most important statement was that by Brezhnev in his speech at Tula in January 1977, when he said that Soviet policy was "not a course aimed at superiority in armaments, but a course aimed at their reduction" (*Pravda*, January 19, 1977). In an article in *Pravada* (August 2, 1979), the Chief of the General Staff, Marshal Ogarkov, quoted this passage and wrote: "We have no other

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doctrine." See also *Sovyetskie Vooruzhennye Sily. Istoriya stroitel'stva* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1978), p. 453: "Every violation of this [strategic] equality, the supply of new systems of armament to armies, is fraught with serious consequences: it will provoke retaliatory pressures and lead to a new spiral in the arms race, to a destabilization of the international situation, to new political difficulties."

[19]For Soviet discussions of the use of military power in this way, see *Voennaya Sila i Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya*, V. M. Kulish (ed.) (Moscow: Izd. "Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya," 1972), and Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, *Morskaya Moshch Gosudarstv* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976).

[20]These issues are discussed with reference to a considerable body of Soviet material in the article by Arnett cited in Ref. 7.

[21]Raymond L. Garthoff, *Soviet Military Policy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 59.

[22]In his Tula speech, Brezhnev declared that "the defensive potential of the Soviet Union ought to be sufficient so that nobody will risk disturbing our peaceful life. Not a course aimed at superiority in armaments . . ." (see Ref. 18). In the joint communique issued after Brezhnev's visit to West Germany in May 1978 it was stated that "the two sides consider it important that no one should seek military superiority. They proceed from the assumption that approximate equality and parity are sufficient to ensure defense" (*Soviet News*, May 9, 1978). These statements mark a change in Soviet doctrine, for the second volume of the Soviet Military Encyclopedia, published in 1976, contains an entry on "military-technical superiority" that declares that "Soviet military doctrine . . . gives a program of actions for ensuring military-technical superiority over the armed forces of probable enemies" (*Sovyetskaya Voennaya Entsiklopedia*, vol. 2 [Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976], p. 253). This may indicate a certain ambivalence in Soviet thinking as to whether equality really is enough.

[23]I have tried to provide a more extensive discussion of these questions in "War, Militarism and the Soviet State," *Alternatives*, Spring 1980.

[24]For an analysis of military-political relations, see Timothy J. Colton, *Commanders, Commissars and Civilian Authority* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1979).

[25]See, for example, the interesting account of a briefing given by General Staff officers to the American side at the Brezhnev-Nixon summit meeting of July 1974 by Joseph Kraft in *The New Yorker*, July 29, 1974, p. 70: "The Americans were disheartened. One of those present said he thought that Brezhnev had been 'sold a bill of goods' by the Soviet military. Subsequently, the Americans checked the Soviet assessment and discovered it was technically justifiable, provided all the optimistic statements made by American admirals and generals about the new weapons were taken at face value and interpreted at what would be from the Russian point of view the worst possible fashion."

[26]V. M. Bondarenko, *Sovremennaya Nauka i Voennoe Delo* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976), p. 41.

[27] For further discussion, see the article cited in Ref. 23.

[28]See John Hardt, "Military Economic Implications of Soviet Regional Policy," NATO Economic Secretariat, 1979.

[29]This is an important issue, precisely because of the influence that a certain reading of Soviet doctrine has had on American thinking. For a Soviet analysis that stresses that alongside acceptance of the principle of assured destruction there has been in American strategic thought a constant search for ways of using strategic power in a more active and offensive manner, see M. A. Mil'shtein, "Nekotorye kharakternye cherty sovremennoii voennoi doktriny SShA," in *SShA*, no. 5 (1980): 9-18.

[30]I owe the idea of the "essentialist" approach to understanding Soviet policy to Alex Dallin.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHAHRAM CHUBIN

U.S. Security Interests in the Persian Gulf in the 1980s

THE PERSIAN GULF WILL POSE the greatest challenge for U.S. security in the 1980s of any region in the world. This is so because it will test U.S. will for involvement and restraint and call into question the assumptions underlying the U.S. approach to the Soviet Union, détente, and the Third World in general. The Persian Gulf region is as vital as any area can be to the Western world. Yet it is covered by no clear security guarantee and, indeed, cannot be, since the threats to the region are multiple and diffuse and the recipients of any prospective assurances unwilling to accept formal commitments. In the shadow of Soviet power, the region is of growing interest to the Eastern bloc. Soviet coercive diplomacy and the exploitation of opportunities interact with indigenous changes that make their disentanglement extremely difficult for Western policymakers. The intersection of Soviet power and interest with the West's acute vulnerabilities, combined with the absence of any tradition of direct interaction in this region as in the Middle East, makes the evolution of East-West relations in this volatile zone tentative and, given the stakes, subject to miscalculation. Outside of Europe the Persian Gulf will be the most pressing security concern for the West, and the region where relations with the Soviet Union will be most directly tested or recast. Relaxed and comforting notions about the long-term benefits of change in the Third World, of the West's capacity to live with pluralism, and of its advantages in peaceful competition with the Eastern bloc also will be tested in a region where the consequences of short-term adverse changes may be devastating for Western economies.

The cohesion of the Western alliance in dealing with a problem that affects the partners unequally, and for which the alliance was not constructed, has already come under strain. The fashioning of a collective response will require a consensus not only on the nature of the threats to the region and the appropriate responses to them, but also unanimity that a concerted effort will be more effective than unilateral policies in achieving the common interest. This requires a coordination of efforts on the domestic front in energy policies as well as the measures to deal with oil supply interruptions and emergencies. But it requires first and foremost the kind of leadership from the United States that the Allies believe can identify the problems and deal with them, but does so without jeopardizing other interests valued by the European partners.

The issues raised by the West's dependence on Persian Gulf oil thus encompass the entire agenda of U.S. foreign policy concerns: relations with the Soviet

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Union, Europe, the Third World, and energy policy. They do so, however, at a time when past assumptions are being called into question. Détente, which many saw as promising arms limitation through arms control and agreement on rules of behavior toward Third World areas, has signally failed. Many now see it as having been an illusion, a "tranquilizer" that paralyzed the West while allowing the Soviet Union to achieve ascendancy in strategic and conventional arms. There is a nagging suspicion that détente, by blurring signals, lulled Western democracies into sloth and eroded their ability to compete. They would prefer to draw the line after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, punish the Soviet Union with trade and other sanctions, expand defense expenditures across the board, and eventually enter into a new dialogue with the Soviet Union from an enhanced position of strength. They see the dangers of miscalculation as arising from Western weakness, not strength, and look to expanded military options as a means of affirming U.S. constancy. In relation to the Third World and particularly the Persian Gulf, this view seeks to deter Soviet opportunism and exploitation of indigenous conflicts and rivalries. It sees the Soviet Union as the prime cause of these instabilities, which would otherwise be manageable. With its emphasis on the U.S.-Soviet competition, it sees setbacks in various regions as potentially linked, creating a sense of momentum that cumulatively creates the perception of Soviet advances that, if unchecked, will encourage appeasement by local states. Considerable emphasis is therefore placed on the role of the United States as alliance leader to prevent damages to its credibility, to reward allies, and to give them an incentive for identifying with the West.

The opposing school of thought emphasizes the benefits of détente and sees the causes of instability in the Third World as primarily local, and the Soviet factor as an irritant. It emphasizes the importance of continued dialogue with the Soviet Union, argues against excessive reliance on military power as a panacea for the ills of a complex and interdependent world, and stresses Soviet vulnerabilities rather than strengths. It argues against seeing every local conflict in light of East-West rivalry, urging instead that these be assessed on their own merits. It therefore tends to see developments in regions as autonomous and individual rather than geopolitically, and its remedy is to get "on the right side of change" and trust to local forces such as nationalism to rectify any immediate problems.

The two approaches are fundamentally distinct in that they differ on the major source of the problem confronting the United States (the Soviet Union or not) and on the remedy (force or not). They also have quite different notions as to the time-frame in which remedies should be available, and on the tolerance of the international system for successive and multiple changes.

The simplified delineation of these two approaches—seldom held without qualifications and exceptions by either school—reflects a continuing dichotomy in the U.S. approach to the Soviet Union and the Third World that will persist in the 1980s. These approaches will be sharply tested in the Persian Gulf; indigenous instability there will give nearby Soviet power many opportunities, and Western vulnerability will create tangible incentives for exploitation. Local forces will be unable in the foreseeable future to balance Soviet power, and the tolerance of the Western world for major or sustained disruptions will be very low.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the Persian Gulf region, then, Western interests cannot be entrusted to longer-term forces. The growth of Soviet military power, its projection capabilities, its augmentation on the periphery of the Gulf—including Afghanistan—and the ease of air access over adjacent airspace have given it undoubted military preponderance in the region. Redressing the military balance will be difficult; costly both politically and economically, and divisive within the alliance and between the West and the regional powers. In addition to the inherent difficulties created by the geopolitical situation for matching Soviet power, there is the nature of the region to be "defended." The local powers are unstable (often uncommitted), and the nature of the threats cannot always be remedied by force. Furthermore, although stakes are high, there are no clear lines of demarcation (as in Europe) to show precisely where the region begins. There can therefore be no clear *casus foederis*. President Carter's ambiguity in his State of the Union address reflected this: "An attempt by an *outside* force to gain *control* of the Persian Gulf *region* will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America. It will be repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force"[1] (italics added). Precisely what constitutes an "outside" power or "control," and what delimits the "region," are of necessity left vague. How the West's interests are to be defended militarily is by no means clear either. But it is at least clear that reliance on regional powers, which constituted the core of the Nixon Doctrine in the Persian Gulf for a decade, is no longer feasible. The local powers are too fragile, their orientations susceptible to change, and (above all) the nature of the threat to the region has grown alarmingly in the past two years. The alternative to the twin-pillar policy of reliance on Iran and Saudi Arabia, however, cannot be recourse to some vague all-encompassing nuclear deterrence either. Even if desirable, it would not be credible in an era of strategic parity in a region of Soviet conventional superiority. The challenge for U.S. defense policy in the Gulf in the 1980s will be to acknowledge the more direct coupling of local instabilities to the global balance in fashioning a broad range of instruments that provide for deterrence and defense, without making every instability a cause for involvement or for automatic escalation.

The Persian Gulf poses formidable conceptual as well as practical problems for U.S. foreign policy. Some of these, such as the U.S. attitude toward change in the Third World, will be sorely tested in a region where specific interests militate against excessive tolerance toward change or reliance on longer-run optimism. The ambiguity of the multiple sources of threat will present problems of identification and definition that require restraint, forbearance, and discrimination, as much as resolve, constancy, and firmness. The deeper forces unleashed by rapid change and societal disruptions will be largely immune to influence from outside powers, however mighty or determined. The states that are the object of Western protection will present many alibis for inaction: authoritarian and traditional structures, corruption, and pusillanimity in the face of prevailing trends in their region. Disassociation from, or embrace of, dictators will be tempting extreme solutions to the complex problem posed by identification with rulers in a region undergoing change. Inevitably, the difficulties of managing a policy that is consistent but flexible, subtle but firm, will give rise to the wish for panaceas. Can the United States and the West, it will be asked (as it was after 1973), afford this much involvement without control? What "control" would look like and whether it is feasible, that is, whether military

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

force would be effective in securing control, is a different question. A related question is whether it is morally acceptable to use force to "secure" resources? What are the alternatives to control besides coping with dependency, and are they feasible in the medium term?[2]

Devising a security policy in the Gulf confronts the United States with a unique challenge in the 1980s precisely because of the ambiguities. Outside of NATO, the Persian Gulf is still vitally important to the OECD states. U.S. policy in the region must lead the Allies, but it must do so in an era where doubts over past policies dispose them toward caution. Militarily weak, the region needs buttressing in a way that will deter the Soviet Union without exacerbating local instabilities; vulnerable to a range of threats that cannot be equally met, its instability is inevitable. Separating these from Soviet-inspired challenges will be difficult. Above all, the high degree of Western vulnerability in the region and current Soviet military preponderance will impart an urgency in the short term (1980-85) that will make all local crises look like challenges to the world balance of power. The first need, therefore, is to redress the military balance as quickly as possible in order to avoid panicky responses.

U.S. and Allied Interests

The core Western interest in the Persian Gulf is usually summarized as access to oil and denial of the region to the (preponderant) influence of the Soviet Union. In practice, both interests have become progressively more difficult to assure in the past three decades, owing to growing Western dependence on oil and the growth of Soviet power and influence. (Other interests in the region are derivative: a moderate regional milieu, in which peaceful change is possible; trade and economic relations that are mutually beneficial and seen as equitable, etc.) The West's dependence on the region is likely to grow in coming decades. (OPEC holds 80 percent of the non-Communist world's proven reserves and supplies, 63 percent of the non-Communist world's crude oil.) An optimistic estimate is that demand for oil in 2000 will be 60 million barrels per day, that is, 15 percent above 1978.[3] Some 25 million barrels per day will be required from OPEC sources, three quarters of which will come from the Gulf states. With even the best measures of conservation, diversification, and so on, for the next two decades the West will continue to depend on Gulf oil.[4] And Persian Gulf oil will continue to be the lowest-cost oil available.[5]

The West's principal interest regarding access to oil is in reducing the likelihood of supply interruptions, temporary or permanent, that would damage their economies and potentially disrupt the alliance. Clearly, there are major related interests, such as the assurance of price stability, adequate exploration and development, on a general partnership between producers and consumers across the board, and a wide range of issues, including investment guarantees, technology transfer, and so on. But, from the standpoint of U.S. defense policy, narrowly defined, the major concern is with threats to the flow of oil from hostile forces rather than from shifts in oil policies (toward more conservation) or even from the ascendancy of factions within a government with different orientations. The latter, if hostile, are also potential threats to Western interests and have to be anticipated in the formulation of overall foreign policy, but they are not in the province of U.S. security policy as such. Threats to the oil flow

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can vary enormously; from a total cutoff for a period to a partial interruption for a short time. These may be because of an interruption, which is temporary, or to the control of a state by a hostile power (e.g., the Soviet Union), which is irreversible and decisive. Interruptions may occur as a result of policy and be "selective" (as in the 1967-73 embargoes) or inadvertent and general owing to internal upheaval (as in the case of Iran in 1978-79),[6] regional conflict, or installation accidents.[7]

In the 1970s Western powers had taken a rather relaxed approach to oil interests in the Gulf, summarized by the comforting notion that the producing countries, after all, "couldn't drink it."[8] The experience of the seventies demonstrated that there was, in fact, no immutable correlation between oil revenues and oil production rates; with demand high (or because of the *perception* of shortage and ensuing panic), decreased production could be more than offset by higher prices. The attitude of the producer states to the Western world and the quality of the relationship between producers and consumers became an important ingredient of whether Western interests would be met or given short shrift. Since these interests extend beyond the mere flow of oil and include the need for a predictable, adequate flow at a "reasonable" price, it is essential that the producing states should be well disposed toward the West. To assure that the West's interests are protected requires friendly regimes whose interests and sensitivities the West takes into account. In addition, it requires a modicum of stability in a region beset by internal and external threats. The West's acute vulnerability to the disruption of oil supplies consequently entails an intense interest in the maintenance of local order, an interest shared with the friendly producing states.

Threats to regional order constituting a menace to Western interests come from both within and without the region. In addition to the denial of Soviet power and the extension of Communist influence, the defense of these interests requires the containment of forces allied to the Soviet Union or which, independently, threaten Western allies or regional order. Internal instabilities that might constitute a threat present the greatest challenge, for they are as difficult to identify as they are resistant to influence or control. Yet, though a challenge, they are amenable to *some* influence, provided the United States does not, in exulting over its loss of "control," further reduce its margin for effective action. The general interests of the Western powers will be served by an environment in which evolutionary change is possible and in which the moderate elements are shielded from disruptive and wrenching pressures for a reversal in their policies or alignments.

For the foreseeable future, defense of Western interests will require three components: (1) denial of the region to the Soviet Union through deterrence and defense, nuclear and conventional; (2) the promotion of a moderately peaceful environment in the Middle East and Gulf regions; and (3) the cohesion of the Western alliance, including Japan.

How these might be achieved is discussed below, but it remains essential here to discuss in further detail the notion of an "orderly environment" since it is evident that the Persian Gulf is in considerable turmoil.

The West's conception of stability in this region must be a dynamic one. Western interests are not met by "no change." Some change and instability are inevitable, and some may well be welcome and may eventually promote stabil-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity. Although change may be inevitable, its pace and course are not, and it is subject to influence. The critical issue is one of ameliorating the causes and consequences of change to minimize disruptive and adverse impacts on Western interests. What makes the Persian Gulf unique in the Third World is that Western attitudes toward change, which may generally be optimistic about its ability to compete peacefully over the long run, cannot be applied. After the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the margin securing Western interests in the Gulf is so narrow that it cannot tolerate further short-term reverses. Inevitably, the intensity of interest necessitates emphasis on the immediate measures essential to shoring up security in the Gulf.

It nevertheless remains essential to identify what is meant by "stability." Western attitudes toward change will be conditioned by specific interests, particularly on its *consequences* for the regional balance (and U.S.-USSR interests) and the manner in which it came about, for example, with external assistance or disruptively. More concretely, Western interests will be least served by changes that overturn regimes friendly to the West; are seen to be the result of Soviet actions; result in an extension of Soviet influence, including the accession to power of revolutionary regimes that pursue policies parallel to those of the Soviet Union; or are additional independent sources of regional disruption. Clearly, there will be distinctions among these; not every pro-Western regime that is replaced by, say, a neutralist one will tip the regional balance; the removal of the regime in Bahrain need not be catastrophic, but that of Saudi Arabia may well be. Here, the manner in which change comes about becomes relevant. Coups are neater and less immediately disruptive of regional order than revolutions or civil wars. And the latter are susceptible, partly because of their duration, to outside power influence.

The combinations of these criteria—the impact on the region and the degree of both outside power assistance and disruption—will need to be assessed in every case. The most obvious cases, for example, a pro-Soviet coup with Soviet assistance and violence, will present fewer difficulties than, say, a pro-Soviet coup that is indigenous and peaceful. The most ambiguous cases will be neutralist regimes coming to power peacefully with indigenous support. In such cases, the definition of Western interests will be sorely tested.

It would be incorrect to view Western interest in a relatively stable Persian Gulf as unrealistic. Although always unstable, the region was not endemically so in the last decade. Rapid economic growth has generated new strains within its societies, while its massive resources now act as a magnet to outside powers. The interaction of internal instabilities with external rivalries and alignments complicates the task of assuring a regional order conducive to securing Western interests. What is new in the 1980s is the narrow margin of tolerance in the West for major disruptions in the region and the presence nearby of the immensely powerful Soviet Union.

The nature of the West's interests in the Persian Gulf thus dictate an involvement in the region's affairs that is unprecedented, requiring a delicate balance between a sustained engagement commensurate with the stakes involved and a prudent and discriminating approach to change in the region. Western interests will require friendly regimes in the region but not "puppets." Sensitivity to the local states' perspectives and priorities will have to be set against those

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the West. The regional partner cannot expect to dictate, but it must be assured of dependable support. These difficulties will be compounded by the authoritarianism of most regimes in the area, which generate opposition and sometimes counterelites. A narrow relationship with the factions or families in power, whose rule is not clearly equitable and who are not conscious of their people's interests, will not survive a regime change. A balance will also have to be struck between the West's short- and longer-term interests (for example, immediate gratification by way of increased Saudi oil production versus the political exposure this would entail for the Saudis in Arab and OPEC politics). At the same time, U.S. interests cannot be protected unless the Western alliance shapes a common approach to the problems facing it, particularly in undertaking measures that balance Soviet military power.

Allied Interests in the Gulf

The dependence of the OECD states on Persian Gulf oil is much more acute than that of the United States. Whereas the latter imports 45 percent of its oil, 25 percent of which comes from the Gulf—accounting for 10 percent of total consumption—Europe imports 57 percent of its oil from the Gulf, and Japan, 70 percent.[9] In a crisis, the OECD countries are therefore likely to suffer far greater damage and disruption. Dependence on the Gulf is nonetheless a common problem: the OECD annually spends $200 billion on Gulf oil, the United States alone accounting for half that sum. The interdependence between threats to the Gulf and those to Europe is also clear; a threat to the former constitutes a direct threat to the latter, and is unlikely to come separate from a crisis in Europe. A substantial interallied consensus exists on the vital importance of the Gulf and on the source of threats, particularly on the need to counter the size and proximity of Soviet military power. This is seen not only in direct military terms but also politically, in its prospective utility to encourage the fragmentation of the alliance by intimidation and implied threats and/or the offer of preferential treatments to selected states. Threats emanating from domestic disorder or regional conflict are also recognized as a potent challenge to allied unity that requires joint responses.

The failure of the alliance to agree smoothly on a common response to the Iran and Afghan crises of 1979-80 has not fundamentally altered the shared interests of the OECD states in the region and the common perspective regarding threats to it. It nonetheless revealed the difficulties of suddenly developing an "alliance" policy on a region outside the NATO treaty area, and of bringing a nonmember state, Japan, into it. This failure, all the more apparent in a major crisis, gave the impression of a failure of will and nerve. If the alliance lacked cohesion when the Soviet Union was close to the Gulf, how (critics wondered) could it maintain unity if Soviet power became more manifest in the next decade?

The OECD states' common stake in the security of the Persian Gulf has been obscured by their disunity in confronting the 1979-80 crisis. The common stake does not imply an identical interest or even unanimity on a joint or individual response. It does, however, imply the existence of shared interests that can be best secured by concerted actions that are mutually reinforcing and com-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plementary, rather than individual arrangements that are transitory, divisive of the alliance, and ultimately ineffectual. What in a period of harmony looks like a practical "division of labor" maximizing the alliance partners' comparative advantage in the region, looks like competition for unilateral advantage in periods of stress. It is therefore important to identify the sources of strain that have made the joint pursuit of a common policy toward the Gulf so difficult within the alliance.

Part of the problem stems from the differential vulnerabilities of Europe and Japan on the one hand, and the United States on the other, to a supply interruption. U.S. dependence on Gulf oil is only recent; until 1967 the United States was virtually self-sufficient. Even in 1973 imports only accounted for 15 percent of total energy use, while by 1978 they had reached 25 percent. Living with vulnerability is thus a novel situation to the United States; for Europe, it has existed for some time. Furthermore, the problem of adequate supply appears to some Europeans to be largely a problem of U.S. making. Not only have U.S. imports risen in the past decade, but they appear destined to grow by another 20 percent by 1985. America's insatiable thirst for oil (6 percent of the world's population consumes a third of the world's oil production, and per capita consumption is twice that of Germany, Japan, and Sweden) thus aggravates the Europeans' more serious problem. From this perspective the U.S. activist policy in the Gulf, announced in January 1980, appears at once belated and inappropriate; too late to do much about the loss of Iran, and inappropriate as a substitute for a tough domestic energy policy. Differences of style further complicate the problem: Europeans are used to living with problems and uncertainty; the American tendency is aggressively to seek definitive solutions.

The divergence of U.S. interests with those of its European allies is more serious regarding the issues of détente, linkage, and relations with the Soviet Union. Part of the problem stems from the persistent tendency to think in terms of separate theaters of political-military interests. The growth of its military power, the achievement of strategic nuclear parity, and a conventional military superiority in the Persian Gulf region has enabled the Soviet Union to seek to accentuate and benefit from this type of thinking. No longer need it hold Europe hostage. It can now offer Europe peace and stability while fighting it out with the United States elsewhere. It can point to Europe as an exemplary model to be imitated in other regions, and by capitalizing on the Europeans' stake in détente, attempt to detach it from the United States.[10] The latter, militarily inferior, and in any case reliant on allied diplomatic support, takes on the appearance of a disruptive power, threatening the peace when it importunes its allies for solidarity.[11]

The wisdom of supporting U.S. initiatives has been further called into question by a crisis of confidence in its leadership in the past three years. The details need not concern us except insofar as they may reflect a decisive structural change in intra-alliance relations, in which the Europeans and Japan will be called upon to play a more active role in formulating alliance policies in the next decade. Suffice it to note here that U.S. indecision and incoherence have aggravated the differences in vulnerability, and reinforced the European perspective about America's partial responsibility for the energy crisis. It has resulted in a European tendency to belittle as an excessively militarized response President

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Carter's decision to build a rapid deployment force, while they promote the comforting notion that the settlement of the Palestine problem will be a panacea for Gulf security.[12] The continental European states in particular have sought to justify their own uncertainties by reference to inadequate alliance consultation and by substituting procedural formulae for decisive action.

The task for American leadership in the coming decade will be to renew faith in its capacity to meet the challenges that confront the alliance as a whole. Whether this is done by a redistribution of responsibilities within the alliance or a reinforcement of those of the past will depend on issues wider than those relating to the Gulf alone. But it is clear that if the shared interests of the OECD countries are to be secured, they must be tackled collectively. This will only be possible, however, if all the Allies recognize that the benefits of a concerted approach outweigh those of unilateral arrangements. A recognition of common interests in the Gulf will not be translated automatically into collective action. There exist enough divergences in interest and emphasis among the Allies (and the possibility of finding excuses and scapegoats) for even minor differences to become major political obstacles to cooperation. Differences in response to crisis will then assume even greater importance within the alliance, shattering its unanimity in the core area of Europe itself. The task of translating joint interests in the Gulf into a common approach, with an appropriate division of responsibility, will be a major one for the alliance in the coming decade. Otherwise, as in a vicious circle, differences on European issues will feed into divergences on the Gulf, and divisions on local issues there will mar cooperation within Europe.

Threats to Security in the Persian Gulf

The Nature of the Threats

Two factors have increased the sensitivity of the Western powers to potential threats in the Persian Gulf: their oil dependence and the growth of adjacent Soviet power, which appears to be tied to an increased interest in the affairs of the region. In past decades "threats" were more narrowly defined than will be true in the 1980s. This was due in the 1950s and 1960s to the abundance of the supply of oil and to reliance on Britain's role as a stabilizer of the region. In the 1970s this reliance was transferred to Iran and Saudi Arabia, which became the "twin pillars" of a regional order, and to faith in both the stability and the political reliability of these regimes. Neither assumption was borne out, and in the new regional context of turmoil and uncertainty, must be discarded in the 1980s.

The nature of the threats to stability has changed radically as a result of the changed political context. The Iranian revolution reflected internal strains, it is true, but it constituted a severe setback to Western (and particularly American) credibility in the region. It simultaneously underscored the potential domestic threats within the region and raised questions about the efficacy and wisdom of alignment with the West. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the same year brought Soviet military power within tactical aircraft range of the Gulf, reinforcing established positions in Ethiopia and Aden. It too raised questions about

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the utility of the Western connection for regional states and offered (by implication at least) the option of accommodation with the Soviet Union as a hedge against further interventions. The crises in Iran and Afghanistan were murky and interactive. Both started as domestic events and had major international consequences, and each event reinforced the other. The invasion of Afghanistan would have been less likely if Iran had remained stable. Its politico-military consequences for the Gulf would also have been considerably reduced if Iran had remained a dependable pro-Western state. These two events illustrate the point that the threats to stability in the Gulf are multiple (domestic, regional, and external), murky (they are ambiguous in their origins and not clearly delineated as such), and interactive (they tend to be reinforcing rather than discrete autonomous or isolated events).

That developing states are rarely politically stable and seldom enjoy excellent relations with their neighbors is generally recognized, and infrequently a cause for alarm, in the Western world. What makes the Gulf region unusual, however, is the combination of circumstances that increase the prospects for sustained instability in a region where Western interests are uniquely reliant on order. First, the domestic stresses attendant on rapid modernization fueled by enormous oil revenues. Second, a political environment in which pressures from issues such as Palestine feed into persistent regional rivalries, and where multiple cleavages—ethnic, sectarian, linguistic—that overlap state boundaries often aggravate relations between neighbors. Third, the competition between the major external powers for influence and access intensifies these rivalries and instabilities, adding such divisive issues as alignment and orientation to the existing menu of instabilities. Western vulnerability, indigenous instability, and proximate Soviet military power combine to give the Persian Gulf an extraordinary importance to Western interests. The sensitivity to threats to these interests is acute, but it is also, by virtue of the multiple sources of threats, diffuse. It is the interactive nature of the threats that complicates the problem of the (analyst and) policymaker in devising a response. Those who point out that threats to the region arise from the inadequate political underpinnings of the region—from the local rivalries that provide fertile ground for exploitation by outside powers—and who thus look to political stability in the region as an answer, are partially correct. Political stability in the Gulf would reduce such opportunities, but it is unlikely to be achieved in the period of the West's acute dependency. Those who point to the Soviet military threat and who devise remedies to meet it are also partially correct. Remove the Soviet threat, or balance it, and most regional instabilities become more manageable. Local crises and interruptions may occur, but they are then unlikely to be permanent or decisive, and, furthermore, pro-Western regimes in the region can be buttressed and assured of Western reliability.

In truth, the "debate" about Western responses to Gulf crises has been about political philosophies, not threats to the Gulf. Analyses of threats in the region in the past decade would reveal that the search for a "pure" contingency (internal versus external) is as illusory as the quest for one instrument of response. The issues are not "political" versus "military" and never have been. What is increasingly clear is that however intractable to military power many of the instabilities associated with political development are, this cannot provide a ra-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tionale for ignoring the political importance of a military balance. Although local opportunities undoubtedly provide fertile soil for outside power exploitation, it is also true that the temptation for exploitation varies with the military balance in the region, and the costs and consequences of such attempts.

The nature of the threats to the Gulf have not increased in the past decade. What has changed is, first, greater Western vulnerability to them and a reduced margin of tolerance for them and, second, the growth of Soviet power and the willingness to use it, which have as a result transformed the stakes in the region. Inevitably, Western perceptions are affected by overt Soviet military aggression in Afghanistan, but this was only the most telling reminder of diminishing Western power. Without Afghanistan, Soviet policies in the region[13] may well have been glossed over by some analysts who confused aspirations for world order with its achievement.

The Regional Context of Threats

The Iranian revolution underscored the tremendous political problems brought on by rapid social change that complicates the problem of assuring orderly change and a modicum of stability in the region. To varying degrees these problems are common to all the Gulf states. The revolution also left in its wake further instability that has washed both shores of the Gulf littoral. It accentuated sectarian cleavages particularly in Iraq, Kuwait, and Bahrain, and emboldened opposition in every country by its populist message and mass revolutionary spectacle. It changed the balance of power in the Gulf, replacing a pro-Western with a nominally neutralist, but actually anti-Western, state that acts as a center for disruption in the region. Even if largely declaratory, the "export of the revolution" by Iran's new regime tirelessly calls into question the legitimacy of the domestic political structures of all the other Gulf states. The revolution has made identification with the West more politically costly, even as it has cast doubt on the utility of such a connection. The balance of power within OPEC has also shifted, with Saudi Arabia more exposed in its "pro-Western" positions in that forum. The territorial integrity of Iran itself has been undermined by what has become a revolutionary condition. Most of the minorities of the country[14]—the Kurds, Arabs, Baluchi, various tribes like the Qashgai, and most of the literate population—have been alienated. At the same time, the prospects for the emergence of the Left in that country have vastly increased.[15] Soviet military power now encircles the country on two sides and may be expected to play a part in any succession crisis following Khomeini's death. Whether the revolution consolidates its hold or disintegrates into factions, fragmenting the country, Iran will continue to constitute a threat to its Gulf neighbors.

Before the Iranian revolution, the region was unstable, although tolerably so. For two and a half decades after the war, Britain's protecting role in the Gulf paid great dividends. It had deterred outside powers from establishing a major presence or from pursuing direct competition in the region. It had contained or frozen territorial disputes in the area, such as Saudi Arabia's claims to the Buraimi Oasis, Iraq's claims to Kuwait, and Iran's claim to Bahrain. It had even prevented the buildup of steam for violent change by accumulating social pres-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sures by preemptively removing leaders who were unpopular or constituted a liability, as in Abu Dhabi in 1966 and Oman in 1970. Though inexpensive to maintain (£12 million annually), the British government by 1968 concluded that the political costs of a continued presence reinforced budgetary arguments for a withdrawal.

The decade of the 1970s therefore saw the littoral states assume responsibility for regional security. Competition among the three major states—Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia—revolved primarily around prestige but was exacerbated by differing alignments. As long as Iraq persisted in its drive to radicalize the region, its relationship was suspect to its more conservative neighbors. Iran took it upon itself to assist Oman in suppressing the secessionist insurgency in that country's southern province. In a tacit division of labor, the Saudi monarchy used its great oil wealth to induce moderation and nonintervention from the other Arab states, particularly Syria and Egypt, and, with more mixed results, Somalia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). By the middle of the decade considerable success had been achieved in establishing a *modus vivendi* among the three largest Gulf powers. Agreement on nonintervention in one another's international affairs was followed by discussions on the general subject of regional security, in Jeddah in 1975 and in Muscat in 1976. The risks of regional conflict arising from interstate disputes were considerably reduced. Polarization among the littoral states had been appreciably muted, even though differing alignments with the two superpowers persisted.

The Iranian revolution undid much of this progress. It ended the prospect of a collective approach to security in the region and reopened the entire question of intervention. From the West's standpoint, it ended any possible reliance on the local powers to maintain regional order. The crumbling of the twin-pillar policy means that in the foreseeable future the West will have to assume direct responsibility for the maintenance of local order. There will thus be fewer means of decoupling local instabilities from outside power competition. The price of order is involvement.

Many of the instabilities in the Gulf need not constitute threats to Western interests unless they are manipulated by interventions by other powers. The countries of the region are, without exception, fragile, whether as large heterogeneous entities or as small city-states. Their large oil revenues (adequately shared out among the poorer sheikhdoms) constitute a historic opportunity for development, but in fact undermine their social foundations. Income inequalities are aggravated, and ethnic and sectarian divisions exacerbated, while the course of modernization itself is under attack from some quarters. Increased literacy and travel abroad increases political expectations in the middle class, which finds itself forced to participate (usually profitably) in systems that are corrupt and rigidly controlled. The populations of the Gulf states are predominantly young—teenagers constitute a majority in several—and their compressed demands on the state apparatus for health, education, and welfare, as well as participation and job mobility, would strain even the most resilient and efficient institutions, which these are not.

The dislocations of modernization, with its unevenness, false starts, and tendency to disorient and alienate constituencies traditionally in support of the leadership, would be less significant if these could be contained internally. Ow-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing to the social composition of the region, they rarely will be. Like a mosaic, the peoples of the area are sprinkled about with little reference to state frontiers. Overlapping groups in Iran, for example, include the Kurds (shared with Iraq and Turkey), the Arabs (with Iraq), and the Baluch (with Pakistan). Linguistically, the Azeri-Turkish population of Iran's Northwest are closer to Turkey than Iran. Iranian nationals of the Shi'a faith are found in large numbers in Iraq (where an Arab Shi'a majority is ruled by a Sunni minority), and in Kuwait and Bahrain. The Shiah population of Hasa, Saudi Arabia's eastern province, largely discriminated against by the Wahhabi Kingdom, looks to Iran for moral support. Similarly, large numbers of Palestinians, usually technocrats in Kuwait, and Yemeni workers in Saudi Arabia reinforce this pattern. This crisscrossing of nationalities and sects contains the seeds for escalation. Domestic disorders, violence, or inequalities can be exploited by adjacent states, which can pose as the protector of their "nationals" or seek to use them as a means of influence in adjacent countries. The most recent example is the mutual manipulation by Iran and Iraq of their neighbors' segmented societies. Potentially more explosive is the future of the Baluchi people of southeastern Iran, which is dependent on the course of affairs in Pakistan. The scope for interference in one another's affairs under the pretext of defending their nationals is virtually unlimited in each of the Gulf states.

The vulnerability of all the regimes both to internal stresses and to rapid shifts in the balance of power has been exacerbated by trends within the region. The Iranian revolution reflected, as much as it promoted, the renewed force of nationalism, tribalism, and Islamic militance. The tacit alliance between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran with the West has been shattered. Increased political consciousness will prevent any renewal of such an open commitment to the West by Saudi Arabia. The regional milieu of inter-Arab, and Iran-Arab relations, which conditions the choices of the Gulf states, now makes for nonalignment. The stalemate of the Camp David process and the potential radicalization of the Arab world inhibit any Saudi move closer to the United States. The rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, motivated by shared concern about Iran's role in the region, is taking place on Iraq's terms. To the extent that it deepens this trend toward nonalignment, it will make redressing the military balance in the region increasingly more difficult.

A catalogue of short and medium threats to Western interests in the Gulf region must of necessity be selective. Three salient candidates for inclusion on any such list must be Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Oman.

In the case of Iran, it requires only an extrapolation of current trends to see the nature of the threat.[16] A regime that consolidates itself and seeks to maintain its revolutionary zeal by the dynamic promotion of its ideals abroad, oblivious to such mundane details as state frontiers or secular authority, poses immense problems for all the states of the Gulf. By supporting opposition groups, it would aggravate their internal vulnerabilities and embolden indigenous dissidents. Few regimes, as we have seen, are immune to this type of destabilization, which can be imitative and generate spontaneous responses. The incident at the mosque in Mecca in November 1979 and the rioting of the Shiah of Hasa province represented responses to developments in Iran rather than purely autonomous affairs.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Alternatively, a weakened Iran disintegrating in slow motion (or rapidly, after the disappearance of Khomeini) will pose equally grave problems for its neighbors. In such a context it would be unrealistic to expect Soviet restraint. A leftist Iran—in any variant—would bring Soviet power to the shores of the Gulf. It would be irreversible, and understood to be so by the littoral states, which would draw the appropriate conclusions for their security policies. Such an Iran would contribute immeasurably to the further extension of Soviet power and influence in the region. On the other hand, the return of Iran to a moderately pro-Western regime would constitute a decisive defeat for the notion that Iran is the "wave of the future." It would alleviate pressures on the Gulf states, hinder Soviet opportunities in the region, and greatly increase the range of choice for Western policymakers. The future of Iran is the single most pressing issue in the Gulf, and its course will influence to no small degree prospects for the defense of Western interests in the entire region.

The second major threat to Western interests is the possibility of a reverse in Saudi Arabia. How this may come about is necessarily speculative, but it is reasonable to expect it will come from the direction of the military rather than by way of a mass revolution. Such a scenario could unfold with a succession crisis in which the royal family's consensus breaks down, and an alliance between one of its members and a unit of the armed forces (perhaps the National Guard) results in a seizure of power. The new regime might then reassess Saudi Arabia's oil and security policies and decide to cut back oil production by two thirds (to 3 million barrels per day),[17] slow down modernization, initiate relations with the Soviet Union, opt for nonalignment, and firmly support the "rejectionist front" on the Palestinian issue. The consequences of the oil cutback alone would be catastrophic for the West if it coincided with Iran's continuing decline as an exporter.[18] The more radical the departure of the new regime from its predecessor's policies, the more its impact will be felt throughout the Gulf. A dramatic change of this type is likely to have consequences for the entire Gulf littoral, acting as a catalyst for parallel actions in the smaller states. A less dramatic and possibly more likely scenario is a multiplication of incremental threats to the Saudi leadership. A series of Mecca-like incidents could sap the moral authority and the legitimacy of the ruling family without providing clear-cut occasions for response. In either scenario, the loss of Saudi Arabia as a close partner of the West and its replacement by a regime that defines its interests radically differently would pose a major threat to Western interests. The likelihood in the short term of either a change in regime or in regime-orientation must be considered as high in the face of the regional and international pressures that currently exist.

A third source of threat to Western interests would be the removal of the regime in Oman. Never close to the Arab states of the peninsula, Oman's traditional orientation has been toward the subcontinent. (Differences with Saudi Arabia delayed diplomatic relations until the mid-1970s.) This isolation was, if anything, aggravated by Sultan Qabus's friendship with the Shah of Iran and dependence on Iranian arms to quell the insurgency in Dhofar. Since the revolution in Iran, Oman has been alone in the Gulf in supporting the Camp David peace process and in identifying openly with the Western powers. This forth-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rightness was ill rewarded until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, after which the United States negotiated access rights to Masirah Island in exchange for the supply of arms.

Oman is vulnerable along a number of fronts. The resuscitation of the Dhofar insurgency by neighboring PDRY (reinforced by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, and the GDR) is one possibility. Another is the infiltration of dissidents from the north through the United Arab Emirates' frontier. A third possibility is a domestic movement opposed to the apparent isolation of the sultan from his people, perhaps with military assistance. Oman provides a tempting target for destabilization, both because of its regional "pariah" status, its political isolation from the Gulf states,[19] and because of its overt pro-Western alignment. A decisive reversal of the regime would at once constitute a blow to the West and an affirmation of Arab nationalism. A number of contenders vie for the honor of achieving this, including the PDRY, various Marxist Arab nationalist factions, and Palestinian groups.

Oman is the state through whose territorial waters the principal shipping channel of the Strait of Hormuz runs. In addition to control of the Musandam peninsula, which can monitor the flow of some 20 million barrels per day through the Gulf, Oman has other intrinsic assets. The island of Masirah is an ideal military facility close to the Gulf but separated from large (and sensitive) population centers. The romantic exaggerations of the strategic importance of the "guardian of the West's jugular" aside, Oman's geography has become more important in the face of both an unfriendly Iran and Soviet power in nearby Afghanistan. An unfriendly Oman would, together with these, make Western power projection well-nigh impossible. In addition, the fall of a regime that has sided with the West would surely further undermine Western credibility and reduce still further the prospect of any other power running risks to assist in securing its interests.

The Soviet Union

The security of its border regions has been a consistent theme of both Russian and Soviet foreign policy. For its weaker neighbors, the Soviet thirst for security has often appeared insatiable and one-sided, a mighty neighbor seeking reassurance while constantly expanding its definition of it. Whether for defensive reasons or not, it is true that the frontiers of the Russian state have constantly expanded southward, sometimes glacially, sometimes abruptly. This historical pattern has been clear since the end of World War II. Soviet concentration initially was on its neighbors Iran and Turkey. The failure of direct claims there was followed a decade later by its "leapfrogging" into Egypt. The costs and consequences of embroilment in the Arab-Israeli conflict rarely paid handsome dividends, although it established the Soviet Union as a power to be consulted in the region, and served as a means of cultivating the most committed and radicalized Arab states. In the past decade Soviet strategy has returned to its primary Middle Eastern interests, its immediate neighbors. It has sought with considerable success to aggravate anti-Western sentiments in Iran and Turkey and weaken their links with the West. By pursuing a strategy of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exploiting local conflicts, it has established footholds on the periphery of the Persian Gulf, in Somalia and later in Ethiopia, in Aden, somewhat uneasily in Iraq, and more permanently in Afghanistan.

Traditional—and understandable—Soviet interests in its southern neighbors would be unexceptional for a great power if the Soviet Union were a traditional power. The overemphasis on security and even on defensive expansion, and the sensitivity to equality and protocol, could be attributed to great power chauvinism were it not for the changed strategic balance within which a renewed Soviet interest in the region "south of Baku in the direction of the Persian Gulf" has come. Soviet aims, however, quite apart from balancing the West and achieving superpower status, are explicitly revisionist and anti-status quo. The intention to alter the international system by utilizing a changed correlation of forces is not a secret. To this end the Soviet Union has an array of instruments, including Communist parties, that are scarcely traditional. Its unusual characteristics as a power would nonetheless be insufficient reason for alarm if the political-military balance in the region were steady.

There is a general recognition in 1980 that détente, to the extent that it referred to mutual restraint in Third World areas, was at least misread in the West. Competition has persisted there and, indeed, appears to be seen by the Soviets as the litmus test of power. Simultaneously, in a period of disillusionment and reassessment, the steady growth of Soviet power has been evaluated somewhat more starkly than was true in the 1970s. In the Persian Gulf this appraisal is not reassuring. While Soviet capabilities to project power into the Gulf region have been enhanced by improved technology and greater access through the airspace of bordering states, that of the West in general has declined.[20] These diminishing military capabilities coincide, however, with a period of great vulnerability to interruptions of oil. This is further underscored by the proved willingness of the Soviet Union to use its military power directly or indirectly through allies to achieve decisive results in conflicts in the Third World.

If Western military capabilities have declined at a period of maximum vulnerability, those of the Soviet Union have increased. Soviet willingness to employ force has been unhampered by debates about its declining utility. In the Persian Gulf, therefore, capabilities have changed—but what of intentions? These are surely as contingent on opportunities and risks as they are on payoff. Opportunities for exploiting indigenous instabilities abound in the region, as we have seen, while the risks are considerably reduced by the improved military position of the Soviet Union. But why is it increasingly interested in the Gulf region?

To the traditional geopolitical interest in the bordering region has been added new ingredients. First, its own and the Eastern bloc's growing interest in access to inexpensive oil. The reduction of Soviet oil exports to its Comecon allies will necessitate a search for alternative suppliers. Ideally, OPEC oil delivered on preferential terms—or bartered—will make up the short-fall, and do so without requiring the payment of hard currency. How such an arrangement may be made satisfactory to the oil producers is unclear, but the closer the political relationship between the Soviet Union and OPEC states, the greater its likelihood. An incentive for compliance in such arrangements may come from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet military predominance in the region. This would demonstrate the political utility of military power. Control of Middle Eastern oil would be attractive quite independent from Eastern bloc oil needs. It would confer great influence. Its cheapness (actual cost $1 a barrel versus its price of $30 a barrel) means that a tremendous economic rent (approximately $200 billion a year) could be manipulated to influence friends and split hostile alliances.

Second, the combination of growing Soviet military capabilities and a concomitant tendency to define its security more widely has interacted with declining Western capabilities and growing vulnerability within the region. In conjunction with the volatility of a region whose stakes have increased, the balance between opportunities and risks has shifted radically. Interests have followed capabilities.

The dilemma of the Western alliance in the Gulf is not then simply vulnerability to interruptions of a commodity on which they are, to varying degrees, dependent. It is not the problem of regional instability that creates major anxiety. It is the knowledge that the region's proximity to the Soviet Union and the latter's demonstrated willingness to use force—directly and indirectly—could, if undertaken in the Gulf, confront alliance members with a choice between acquiescence in a decisive shift in the balance of world power or conflict in a region in which they currently suffer serious handicaps.

These handicaps are partly—but only partly—because of geographical asymmetries, foremost among these being the Soviet Union's presence as a land power in close proximity (tactical air-power range) to a region containing petroleum resources. Although the geography is immutable, the military imbalance that has been allowed to develop is not. Yet geography does confer important advantages, necessitating less reliance on long supply lines, less emphasis on immediate response, and less pressure on cultivating a reputation for credibility and sustained dependability. The Soviet Union has staying power; it requires no presence (it *is* present), and there is no need to reassure allies about the long haul—it is in the region and unable to get out. Politically, this provides great dividends to military power, the shadow of which can benumb the neighbors of the Soviet Union and exert pressure on them simply by its proximate existence. Militarily it has obvious, but not inevitable, advantages, necessitating less reliance on sea power or on allies for a presence.

The emphasis on Soviet threats to Gulf oil is often posed in terms of Soviet control and of direct Soviet military action. Although these are important conditioners of the political atmosphere in the Gulf, it is useful to look also at threats in the Gulf that are both more probable and less risky, but that flow out of a changed overall military balance. The threat of control itself has important political effects both for regional powers and for alliance members. In the atmosphere of increased or renewed competition between the superpowers, Soviet policies will continue to be zero-sum. Even if they harm the Soviet Union, interruptions that harm the West *more* will be seen as inherently welcome.[21] Interruptions will be easier to disguise, too, given regional instabilities. The shift in military capabilities means that Western risk-free interventions characteristic of the 1950s and 1960s will be inhibited.[22] This makes the regional balance and trends within the region a major determinant of the security of supply.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Soviet Union is well placed to exploit and influence regional developments. This is partly because change that occurs indigenously is often disruptive of the status quo and hostile to the West's alignment to it. Issues such as Palestine and the U.S. relationship to Israel are another source of radicalization that the Soviets exploit tactically. Soviet power and proximity are additional assets that can be converted into political dividends requiring appeasement; Kuwait's attitude reflects this. Saudi Arabia is especially susceptible to this and is in the process of acknowledging it. The local states' fragility provides multiple opportunities to exercise pressure: assistance to groups engaged in power struggles or succession contests; using national weaknesses as a lever against governments by supporting, for example, national minorities or secessionist movements;[23] linking opposition forces in various countries[24] and assisting forces that are against pro-Western regimes.[25] Indirect assistance through allies such as Cuba, Bulgaria, and East Germany persists throughout the Gulf area. Overlapping interests with various factions of the PLO also provide an indirect conduit for assistance to forces that are anti-Western.[26] These means of pressure are illustrative; others could be added, such as radio propaganda, criticism by Soviet-front organizations such as the Arab-African People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), and the international Communist party network.

The combination of coercive diplomacy and indigenous instability and vulnerability, of *relevant* Soviet power and local insecurity, provides most Middle Eastern governments with good reasons to seek to neutralize, if not actively accommodate, the Soviet Union. In general terms, this provides the Soviet Union with the means to inhibit their responsiveness to Western interests (e.g., requests for access to facilities), while itself gaining benefits (such as overflight rights to Saudi Arabia's airspace by Aeroflot). In the future, such "requests" could encompass oil supplies and, subsequently, preferential terms.

In brief, Soviet assets in the region are plentiful owing to a number of significant asymmetries. Geography provides the Soviet Union with a permanent presence that the West can match only with difficulty. Militarily, this allows the deployment of troops within Soviet territory to be "in" the region, while the West is confronted with the difficult problem of offsetting the Soviet Union at the end of long and vulnerable lines of communication and supply. Furthermore, the Soviet Union need only cultivate neutrals to gain preponderant influence and deny Western powers access, while the West requires friends prepared to run risks.[27] Finally, in the sponsorship of anti-Western forces in the region, the Soviet Union thrives on disorder, an ingredient in abundant supply. Intrinsically, the Western predilection for order is more difficult of achievement.

That Soviet military power may be converted into political influence leading to the neutralization of the region, and acquiescence in this by a vulnerable and divided Western alliance, is not a scenario requiring much imagination. Its ingredients are with us now, and the trends are equally visible. Of all the Soviet threats, this is the most insidious, for it is slow, barely perceptible, and therefore provides few rallying points for resistance. In this respect the Soviet invasion may still prove to have been a major error. To the extent that it has sensitized the alliance to the shift in the military balance (which Afghanistan reflected rather than caused) and results in concrete measures to redress this, it may have provided the Western powers with the necessary shock for remedial action against this long-term threat.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Soviet Union's opportunities for exploiting regional instabilities outlined earlier are, of course, legion. No purpose would be served by listing exhaustively even the likely or probable areas of such instabilities that could be converted into direct or indirect Soviet threats to Western interests. For illustrative purposes, it is worth distinguishing between various types of likely threat in the 1980s and differentiating between the catalysts for them.

1. Soviet military invasion. A direct attack on a Gulf state (most likely Iran) may come "out of the blue" or as a result of a deterioration in U.S./Soviet relations and a crisis elsewhere (probably in Europe), or to "defend" Soviet interests in Iran. An invasion of Iran arising from a general crisis with the West may take two forms: a direct attack on the whole of Iran, including the oil fields; or a limited incursion and occupation of part of Iran, probably a northern province. The former would not be isolated and would constitute part of a more general conflict occurring in Europe; the latter would be political-symbolic, a reminder to the West of its vulnerability in the region, with Iran as the pressure point.

A third possibility is an invasion in which the catalyst is a civil war or disintegration in Iran or Saudi Arabia. In this scenario a Soviet invasion could occur either by reference to some defensive interests[28] in the country or to an invitation by one or another faction within the country. Such invitations are not difficult to contrive, and the invasion could be rapid and cloaked in legality, presenting the West with very little reaction time and a choice between acquiescence or escalation. In the immediate future[29] the possibility of internal instability within Iran or Saudi Arabia (owing to civil war or a power struggle) as a catalyst for direct Soviet military action appears to be the most likely scenario for Soviet intervention.

2. Soviet support for one power in a regional conflict, a category of threats somewhat less direct. The most likely scenario here is Soviet support for Iran against the Ba'ath in Iraq. In the past Moscow has been reluctant to take sides in this conflict. But Iran's importance to the Soviet Union as both a neighbor and a Gulf state, together with the Soviet-Iraqi estrangement, has changed this. The opportunity to ingratiate itself with the Iranian regime and to strengthen its position in Iran may well encourage this in the future. A similar case can be made for Soviet support for the PDRY against Saudi Arabia. Soviet assistance to Aden made possible the flare-up in March 1979 with the Yemen Arab Republic, yet it was difficult for outsiders to label it clearly as a Soviet probe or an attempt to pressure Saudi Arabia. Similarly, Soviet support for the PDRY against Oman that was characteristic in the 1970s may well be revived soon. All three of these scenarios remain highly probable in the short term. The factors that might precipitate them are neither solely regional nor manifestly external. Grievances aplenty exist in the region, and outside powers can take their pick.

3. Indirect, covert threats. Because of the murkiness of politics in this region, and owing to the lower risks and high potential payoff, this type of threat is especially attractive. Support for a faction in a civil war or succession struggle need not be direct or by invasion; it can be covert and deniable. Secessionist movements can cause problems for unfriendly governments,[30] and disaffected

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minorities[31] in strategic areas can interrupt oil supplies (e.g., the Arabs in Iran, the Kurds in Iraq, the Palestinians in the Gulf, or the Shiah in Saudi Arabia). The Soviet Union has the means for wielding "relevant" power in these cloudy situations and is less constrained than the West in so doing. Even limited injections of power can have decisive consequences in a region where institutions are fragile and the nation-states barely integrated.

Western Options

Interpreting the Soviet View

At the heart of the debate about American security policy in the 1980s is the issue of the Soviet Union, its intentions and its capabilities. Divisions within the United States (and West in general) revolve around this. What is the nature of the Soviet threat? How central is its role in regional instabilities? What is an appropriate response to it? What is an appropriate conception of longer-term U.S.-Soviet relations? Subsumed under these questions are a host of assumptions and values related to world politics: the role of force; the future of arms control; the nature of relations with the Third World; and the indispensability of détente.

Those who have advocated a world-order approach[32] have insisted on the complexity of international relations today, its many problems cutting across traditional alignments, forming new interdependencies, and creating obstacles to the neat application of military power. They see the Soviet Union as only one—not the central factor—in stirring up instability in the Third World, and caution against any tendency to see local problems strictly in terms of East-West rivalry. They fear the emergence of a nostalgia for a simpler world where most problems were solvable by force, alignments were clear-cut, and problems of priority and balance were less taxing. In this view, "excessive" emphasis on military responses at the expense of diplomacy will be damaging both in its economic costs domestically and in the inevitable arms competition that will ensue with the Soviet Union, without commensurate gains for security. Ultimately, the gains in détente and cooperation with the Eastern bloc will be jeopardized.

This school of thought argues for a multilevelled response, one offering guidelines rather than policies, and that seeks to emphasize complexities, the need for caution, and the long-term conception. Because it sees the Soviet's role in regional instabilities as secondary, it tends to deemphasize the military threat, arguing the need for building up the political underpinnings in the regions concerned. In this view, the Soviets naturally exploit local opportunities; thus the remedy is to reduce such opportunities by promoting political stability. Rather than rely on military force to act primarily as a deterrent, they argue that the Soviet Union must be given incentives—carrots as well as sticks. Since the Soviet Union's drive for status in the Middle East has been stymied, Hoffmann argues it has played the role of "spoiler" in the region.[33] The Soviet Union also has vital interests in the Persian Gulf area, and attempts to exclude it there may

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only encourage its mischief-making. Clearly, the answer is to bring the Soviet Union into a co-management role that nourishes its sense of equality and elevates it to the role of "co-manager of world affairs."

The second school of thought, currently in the ascendancy, can be summarized more briefly. It sees the Soviet role as primarily one of encouraging otherwise manageable regional instabilities; it interprets the Soviet drive as one of stark power, not status, and sees no vital Soviet interest in the Gulf comparable to that of the West. In terms of responses, it argues that the military instrument is insufficient by itself, but that it must be a primary ingredient to check the military imbalance in the region. It is concerned less with the possibility of war arising from firm responses and arms races than it is by misperceptions and inadvertence owing to failure to make Western policies clear. It sees no stable long-term relationship with the Soviet Union as possible without a clear sense of mutual respect, including an understanding of each other's threshold of tolerance. Finally, it sees détente in its broadest sense as fundamentally misconceived if it is to be used as an excuse for not responding to interests that are threatened, or as a means to lull the West's democratic populace into a false sense of security.

From these quite different philosophies flow radically different policy suggestions. If the Soviet drive is for status, and its role as spoiler arises from its exclusion from managing regional affairs, would its involvement in the Gulf buy good behavior? Are Soviet interests in the Gulf, in fact, "equally important" to them (as Hoffmann argues), comparable to the West's vital interests? The implications of such a diagnosis needs to be dwelt on, for historically the Soviet Union has had no role in the Gulf, and its interest in Gulf oil (which may be derivative through Eastern Europe) is still only incipient. Interest in Iran is long-standing but only, in fact, in northern Iran. To accept a Soviet interest in the Gulf *comparable* to the West is to argue that proximity confers undoubted general rights, and to acknowledge that Soviet military power has finally managed to gain a concession that Russia was never accorded.

The implications of this line of thinking are serious indeed. If the Soviet Union does have vital interests in the Gulf, what need is there to give it a stake in the region? Those, like Paul Warnke,[34] who have made the suggestion of a regional security arrangement with guarantees by outside powers, have done so with little reference to how these guarantees are to be honored from a position of Western military inferiority. Soviet hints of equal interest requiring equal access and the need for a consumers conference have suggested that, while the Soviet Union and Europe have vital interests in the region, the same could scarcely be said of the United States. The purpose of these proposals—that Europe and the Soviet Union can work together reliably—is to widen the breach in the alliance.

Quite apart from the impact on the alliance and the poor precedents for the inclusion of the Soviet Union in such schemes,[35] there is the question of Soviet policy itself. Since 1969 the Soviet Union has assiduously courted, without great success, Asian states for support of a vague Asian collective security arrangement in which it is accepted as an Asian power. The exclusion of the United States and the West has been a natural corollary of this. Is there any

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reason to expect that the inclusion of the Soviet Union in some co-management scheme in the Gulf—already an extraordinary concession to Soviet power—would be sufficient?

Proposals such as Hoffmann's and Warnke's are often made consciously as a substitute for cultivating military power. This is precisely why they are attractive to the Soviet Union, which ties such discussions to the "nonmilitarization" of the Indian Ocean.[36] The very process of discussion could restrict Western ability[37] to deal with the military imbalance in the region, which is the foundation of any sound security arrangement. Geographical asymmetries that give the Soviets an advantage militarily clearly have to be compensated for by the West. In addition, it should be noted that any scheme that ratifies Soviet "equality" of interest in the region without assuring a clear balance of military power will be a formula for Soviet preponderance. The very process of discussions about this before the military balance is established will have debilitating consequences for Western allies and regional partners alike.

The Military Option

After the systematic disparagement of military power in recent years, the decision to accelerate the formation of the Rapid Deployment Force and to seek facilities for it in the Gulf region necessarily seems militaristic. It appears hasty and reactive and even simplistic to many who stress the intractability of the political problems of the region to simple solutions. Yet, the fact that increased military power will not solve in itself all the problems of a region is not an argument against it. It may well be that military power as an instrument of policy is the precondition for influence in the region. While not sufficient in itself, it is the essential prerequisite for *any* policy.

Earlier policies based on the assumption of shared interests with the Soviet Union and the regional states have not worked. The belief that regional states could assume the defense of the region has also proved false: regimes have fallen, priorities have been reversed, and the twin pillars were exposed as hollow even before an external threat was confronted. The Soviet military buildup in its south, on the peripheries of the Gulf and in Afghanistan, have only underscored the need for a military presence in the region to secure Western interests and balance Soviet power.

Western interests require both an orderly environment and the existence of friendly states. A military balance in the region together with a presence could contribute to both by deterring the Soviet Union and regional aggressors and reassuring Western partners in the region.[38] The relationship between the larger and lesser military contingencies in the region is relatively clear. As Albert Wohlstetter has cogently argued: (1) Soviet risk-taking in the region will be influenced by the prevailing military balance; (2) the readiness of the local states to accept Western help can also be influenced by increasing the incentives for such identification and reducing the risks, a factor dependent on their perceptions of the military balance of power and Western dependability; and (3) the ability of the West to respond to lesser (more likely) threats will itself be conditioned on the prevailing *overall* military balance, the "shadow of possible wars."[39]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The need for rectifying the military imbalance may be granted without acceptance of the need for a Western presence, which creates political problems for partners in the region. Yet, both persuasive political and military factors and the nature of probable contingencies in the region argue for such a presence. The great military advantages of the Soviet Union enumerated earlier (proximity, short lines of supply, land and land-based-air, peripheral bases, and short response time) create incentives for a quick *fait accompli*. Deterrence of this by a presence outside of the region is inherently more risky—open, at least, to doubt. Assumptions that look to dealing with Gulf crises by responses elsewhere—or by nuclear arms—have seldom been thought through carefully. They appear uniformly unattractive. Deterrence by nuclear threat especially in a period of strategic parity is not likely to be credible if one side is confident that the other is weaker in local forces and unwilling to suffer nuclear attack where the stake is not the homeland.[40] Here, as elsewhere, the more that is done in balancing conventional forces, the more credible the threat of escalation to nuclear, and the higher the threshold.

The lack of a presence in the region itself perpetuates other problems. The speed with which many contingencies may unfold will require a rapid response if the West is to arrive in time. The military need for reaction on early warning is obvious: to arrive second is to be in the position of escalating the conflict, and would require a heavier commitment of troops and materiel. Yet the ambiguity and murkiness of many contingencies may well encourage the delaying of decisions, thus permitting the *fait accompli*. But there are also risks in responding too early; a rapid arrival on a false alarm will make the West appear as the aggressor; a rapid arrival on correct information will expose the U.S. military—who will be lightly armed—to a determined foe, creating pressures for rapid reinforcement and escalation. Indeed, the very fact of exposure on deployment may inhibit recourse to the military.

If these are problems arising from the absence of a military presence in the region, and such a presence is unlikely to be politically acceptable[41] to the local states *in the short run*, what are the alternatives? The Rapid Deployment Force with its emphasis on mobility and speed and on access to facilities en route to, and in, the region is the current U.S. response to this dilemma. The mission of this force is primarily peacekeeping and is complemented by an enhanced naval presence.[42] It is to be buttressed by the prepositioning of equipment in logistical supply ships near the Gulf and by the use of facilities in Kenya and Oman, and the augmentation of those in Diego Garcia some two thousand miles distant. Three principal variables will affect the efficiency of this force:[43] the susceptibility of the issue to military power; the cooperation of local states; and alliance cooperation. Clearly, the naval component is the least politically controversial, being flexible, proximate, and relatively unobtrusive. Yet it is precisely for these reasons that it is by itself insufficient; its value as a trip wire is less than that of a ground force, and its capacity to reassure is diminished by its freedom to withdraw. Even so, the maintenance of the present force in the region will require multiple agreements on home-porting and arrangements for oil, water, and other provisions.

The utility of the RDF in dealing with threats to the region's stability merits brief comment. As an element contributing to the deterrence of aggression in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the region—whether by the Soviet Union or a regional power—it will be essential. In *defense* of allies against local threats, secessionist movements and the like, and as a factor for reassurance,[44] it will also be necessary. Illustrative examples are: a coup taking place in Saudi Arabia, and the United States offering the government assistance; or, after a coup has taken place and the Soviets invited in, the U.S. response in getting there first. In deterrence of adversaries, defense, reassurance of allies, and reversal of sudden destabilizing actions, the RDF will be indispensable.

The military instrument—whether in the shape of nuclear assurances, a large presence of conventional forces, or light forces nearby—is essential for any future U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf region. The cultivation of these instruments will not be easy, given the political obstacles (including allied skepticism and regional doubts) and the call for material expenditures elsewhere. The temptation to seek panaceas in political deals with the Soviet Union or in crude nuclear threats will have to be resisted. So, too, will the expectation that the military response is itself a substitute for a policy or diplomacy.

The Political Dimension

The political constraints operating on the deployment of forces in the region create serious problems for the military planner that may, with time, be ameliorated. The ideal circumstance of a substantial military presence in the region—rather than mere access to facilities—may appear less risky as the seriousness and dependability of the United States is seen to increase. The ambiguity of the military instrument itself (Defend oil or defend regime? Defend oil or seize it?) may also diminish. In the meantime, the political forces of the region will condition the receptivity of regional states and sorely try their external partners.

In the area of arms sales, for example, there will be a continuing need for both sensitivity and restraint. The obvious inability of the Saudi army to defend itself from major external threats is insufficient reason to take their arms requests less seriously. Insecure partners rarely feel adequately reassured. Nowadays, tangible evidence of their importance is indicated by the sophistication of the weapons sold them. Even though such weapons (e.g., the F-15 air superiority fighter) rarely increase their security or meet their primary vulnerability, the weapons take on a symbolic dimension in the relationship that is difficult to deny. The need for restraint here involves much more than Israeli objections: ultramodern equipment may diminish the recipient's defense capability by diverting scarce manpower into unproductive areas. In addition, military training as such may increase the chances of a military coup, without adding much to defense capability.[45] Finally, the sale of such weaponry, while improving the climate of relations,[46] rarely provides the supplier with positive leverage. Nevertheless, sensitivity to the regional partners' concerns and the cultivation of bilateral relations necessitate some sympathy to such requests, whatever their defects on strictly practical grounds.

Sensitivity to local partners' priorities requires reliability, but it does not entail servitude. There is no reason the peculiar whims or historical animosities of a particular partner should dictate the West's response. Nor should the security perspective of the local state drive that of the outside power. A willingness

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to use influence with the regional state when it is following an inappropriate or detrimental course is essential. But to do so requires an involvement with that state that makes such advice credible and not gratuitous. The difficulty of securing Western interests in this region arises not only from its acute vulnerability, or even from the practical difficulties of mounting an adequate defense of the region, but also from the instability of the West's allies to internal and regional forces, and the interpenetration of the Gulf with the forces at work in the Arab world to the West and the Asian East. This requires of the West a fully integrated response that is multilevelled, comprising military, political, and economic instruments that are coordinated with allies, regional and extraregional, and that are buttressed by policies in adjacent regions. The military instrument is intended to deter and defend the region from forces intent on disruption and to provide an environment in which Western interests are secured and peaceful change is made possible. It needs to be complemented by a number of these measures, such as close bilateral relations with key states such as Saudi Arabia and Oman, accepting that their priorities will differ from those of a global power. It also requires a change in attitude from passivity to activism; from damage limitation to a grand strategy that both accepts the unwelcome fact of vulnerability and deals with it on several levels, eschewing such extreme dichotomies as either the RDF or nothing, either formal alliances or nothing. Apart from deterrence of threats, measures need to be devised to prevent, limit, ameliorate, and resolve strains and conflicts in the region that provide opportunities for Soviet exploitation. Pending the formation of the RDF and improvement in the reputation of the United States as a dependable ally, much can be done. The prevalence of multiple sources of instability within the region itself necessitates a strategy that deals with their causes. Less visible than a military buildup and far more demanding of subtlety, insight, and tenacity is the broadening of the political relationship with the Gulf states. The political strategy should have as its aim the prevention, and amelioration, of sources of strain and conflict and, as a second step, their containment and resolution.

The emphasis on preventive measures is self-evident; it has at least three dimensions—intelligence, influence, and power. Domestic pressures that may build up, political trends that indicate future problems, and social stresses that may explode—all need careful analysis and assessment. The exercise of influence on governments may go some way toward averting or at least reducing the severity of the discontent that is an inevitable concomitant of rapid growth. By a combination of intelligence analysis and early warning of the problems, the possibility of timely adaptation is increased. A related component of good local intelligence is its potential value against subversion, guerrilla attacks (e.g., on oil installations), and coups. This requires both a Western capacity for covert activities and the limited application of military power when necessary. The prevention of coups before they take place is infinitely less risky than attempts to reverse them—and probably easier to achieve. In the immediate future there is a pressing need for better and more extensive intelligence activity in the region, together with a capacity to undertake limited, secret military operations. In Saudi Arabia this will be critical in the years ahead. In Iran, where there is a continuing power struggle, it is essential that the Soviet Union and its allies not be given a clear field in which to promote their nominees. The prevention of a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Communist regime in Iran is infinitely easier to achieve than its removal. Threats to defend U.S. interests mean very little if they require the purest contingency before they are activated. The emphasis on the military imbalance in the region and the need for its rectification cannot be alibis for inaction where vital interests are threatened indirectly. The choice between RDF or nothing is no choice at all.

A second, related component of political strategy must be the amelioration of those pressures that contribute to the instability of the oil producers. In nation-building and development, the role of the outside power is necessarily limited. To the extent that its policies do not exacerbate existing problems (e.g., by excessive commercialism), it may make a contribution. A second potential source of pressure—regional politics—is somewhat more susceptible to influence. Two sources of regional disruption stand out: the issue of Palestine and the revolutionary regime of Iran. The former contributes to the radicalization and anti-Westernism of the Arab world, the latter to the internal divisions (especially sectarian) of the states. Of the two, the Iranian revolution is the greater immediate threat to the stability of the Gulf states. A change in the nature of the Iranian regime would ameliorate many of the pressures that have contributed to the instability of the oil-producing states. The defusion of the issue of Palestine would also make it much easier for these states to identify with the West.

A third component embraces the *containment* of disputes or conflicts in the region. This involves deterrence of regional aggression by the maintenance of a regional balance, arms sales, and diplomatic support. It also includes a recognition that some disputes are indeed local[47] and should stay that way, without outside power involvement that would risk polarizing the conflict. The development of regional norms for managing conflict, and agreements on not promoting subversion or intervention, whether bilateral[48] or multilateral, while they cannot be encouraged, can at least be discreetly welcomed. The willingness of third parties (e.g., Kuwait) to mediate in regional disputes, or for key states to use their influence in appropriate circumstances (e.g., Iraq in the PDRY in 1979; Saudi Arabia in Lebanon in 1976), can also contribute to containing local conflict.

The fourth area is the resolution of disputes. Few areas in the world today have seen conflicts resolved without decisive victory;[49] more often they are frozen and forgotten, only to be revived again by a new regime. Many of the region's outstanding territorial disputes (e.g., Iraq's claim to Kuwait) have been overtaken by the necessity for some form of regional solidarity in the light of the threats to all its regimes. Those disputes that are currently live issues, such as those relating to the frontier between Iran and Iraq, reflect the generalized rivalry between the two regimes rather than specific stakes in themselves. The political climate in the Gulf region is unlikely to see definitive settlements as much as the nonpursuance of claims. So long as the states involved do not periodically reactivate these disputes as a means of pressuring their neighbors, they do not need permanent resolution. The role of the Western powers will be limited to encouraging existing regional organizations like the Arab League and to the assurance of a military balance that discourages resort to force as a means of conflict resolution.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S. involvement in the region must be commensurate with that of its interests. Since its regional partners are insecure and unstable, it must provide means to assure their security. Since threats to their security originate from many sources, including domestic sources, some provision must be made for this without an indiscriminate open-ended commitment to a particular regime. The military requirements for providing this security are a prerequisite if the United States is to have any influence in the region. A complementary area is political involvement, where bilateral ties can provide other means of power besides large-scale military forces. In both areas the Western allies can make a useful contribution, perhaps providing certain services not feasible if the United States were to act alone.

The Alliance's Options

There has been considerable division within the alliance concerning an appropriate policy to adopt in dealing with Gulf contingencies. Differences, however, have not extended to core issues: there is no disagreement on the vital geopolitical importance of the Gulf region and on the potential Soviet threat. Agreement on a set of responses has been more difficult to achieve. This is so for two principal reasons. First is the greater dependence of the Allies (Europe and Japan) on Gulf oil, together with a greater sense of immediacy about détente (especially in Europe). Second, and this compounds the first, is the sense of U.S. undependability; its incoherent policies and uncertain leadership have raised doubts about its responses. This has created a mood among the Allies of profound skepticism regarding the policies of a nation that swings from underreaction to confronting the Soviet "threat" overnight. Questions are raised, therefore, about this new tough line, and doubts voiced both about the soundness of its analytical underpinnings and its durability. These doubts are reinforced by U.S. energy and trade policies, which are seen as competitive[50] and partly responsible for the squeeze on oil supplies. As a result, the Europeans have sought to play the role of restrainer, advocating caution to the impulsive senior partner.

Owing to differing vulnerabilities and to concern regarding U.S. motives and its leadership capacity, there has been an unwillingness among the Allies to associate themselves fully with Washington. There has emerged a tendency to find reasons to distance oneself from an ally that is a less attractive associate in the region because of its identification with Israel. This has taken the form of criticising the U.S. reaction to Afghanistan as one-dimensional, precipitate, and possibly excessive. The argument is made that the political "track" is more important, that threats to the Gulf originate from local political circumstances, principally from intense pressures emanating from peoples and governments radicalized by the failure to achieve a Palestinian settlement. In recognition of this, the European states have sought to pursue a quasi-independent policy of shoring up the Arab moderate regimes by sponsoring "initiatives" that are more responsive to Arab-Palestinian aspirations than those entertained (because of its relationship with Israel) by the United States. It has been argued that such European initiatives can contribute to the "moral climate" on the subject, temporarily substitute for the lack of progress in the Camp David peace process,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and provide pro-Western Arab governments with a means of averting pressures for more extreme measures.

This type of European role has its enthusiastic advocates in the Arab world. It can be justified—as France does—by reference to its contribution to the general good, while it in fact masks a basic ambivalence, the other component of which is the temptation to secure advantageous bilateral deals with the Gulf states. Indeed, many of the kinds of relations that the Western allies are cultivating with the Gulf states could be—depending on the state of intra-alliance relations—a thoughtful, logical, mutually reinforcing division of labor that efficiently uses each state's comparative advantage to maximum effect, or simply a degeneration of the alliance to competitive quests for bilateral agreements, or *sauve qui peut*. When alliance relations are good, many of the same European initiatives, bilateral arrangements, and so on would be considered an asset to an overall Western policy. In an atmosphere of suspicion, they appear as alternatives.

The Atlantic Alliance is at a watershed. The reasons for this are more extensive than simple differences on policies relating to a particular region. It is not the task of this paper to address the root causes of its evolution and its prospects. It is sufficient here to reiterate that the overall health of the alliance will determine whether individual and parallel policies are coordinated in the interests of the wider alliance, or whether those interests will be undermined by competitive devaluations of political positions in efforts to secure unilateral advantage. The alliance is therefore faced by two sets of tasks that are circular and that interact: first, finding means to improve the atmosphere within the alliance and, second, reaching agreement on measures to meet threats to security in the Gulf, an area not formally covered by the alliance.

The future of the alliance will be determined by progress in several related areas. Better leadership is certainly required, but this is not the same as more U.S. leadership or a reassertion of traditional roles. A recognition of the change among the component units, of their strengths and potential contributions and a better distribution of tasks within the alliance, is essential. Improved procedures for consultation and dialogue are essential if a greater sense of mutual trust is to be developed.[51] A more coordinated energy security policy would contribute to this. A restoration of harmony in the alliance, however, would scarcely be enough. What is urgently required now is a new consensus on a collective approach to areas outside of the formal treaty area. In recognition of the *global* interests of the OECD states, there is a need for institutionalized consultation on these matters, including contingency planning for crises in these areas.

The existing NATO security framework, which excludes Japan and does not cover the Gulf, is inadequate for this task. The U.S.-Japanese security relationship covering the Far East needs to be brought into a wider setting and associated with the European allies. A recognition of the need for a broader grouping covering a wider geographical region is itself testimony to a change in the position of the United States. The aim must be "a grouping of near equals to employ their collective strengths."[52] Yet, although it is clear that NATO itself will be directly affected by Gulf developments, *formal* changes to the alliance requiring renegotiation are unrealistic.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What informal responses that would still constitute an *alliance* response can be envisioned? It is essential to stress that they must be alliance rather than U.S. responses. A unilateral action by the United States has quite different overtones; it may precipitate disunity within the alliance and expose the United States, while unilateral actions are also likely to be less acceptable to the regional states. A good example of the latter is the case of Turkey, which has resisted identification with any measures that appear to be solely associated with the United States rather than the alliance as a whole.

A logical place to start is, indeed, in the strengthening of Turkey. Without being outside the treaty area, Turkey's military power can indirectly affect the balance of forces required in the region and the speed and assurance with which power protection from the outside could take place. The rearming and augmenting of facilities in Turkey has started—albeit far too slowly. It has seen a first practical example of a "division of labor," with major participation in an aid-consortium by the Federal Republic of Germany.[53] The improvement of Turkey's defense (including modernization of its air bases), together with economic assistance to meet its many social problems, is in many ways the easiest task facing the alliance. An alliance member, democratic, and needy, Turkey's stability will affect the range of choice available to deal with Gulf contingencies. Instability in the Gulf, and particularly Iran, will in turn profoundly affect the prospects for the achievement of stability within Turkey.

The shoring-up of Turkey, though difficult, is not a test of the need for a new distribution of responsibilities within the Western world and Japan for meeting broader threats. Pending a formal agreement on this need,[54] informal arrangements for concerting responses to problems in the Gulf region are essential. Political and military contingency planning,[55] and integrated means of command and control available and nearby, must exist before crises occur. As I argued earlier, most crises will require rapid response; improvisation will be inadequate.

The role of the United States as senior partner, uniquely possessing the means of deterrence and a global navy, will persist. But the roles of the European states and Japan will necessarily grow. A first requirement here is a recognition, alluded to earlier, of the need for a collective presence (however symbolic) in the region. However token, a multilateral presence is imperative to demonstrate the acceptance of some responsibility. Less difficult of achievement, perhaps, is a willingness to compensate for the drawing-down of stocks from Europe (or Japan) for emergencies in the Gulf and a willingness to plan, with the expectation that American reserves hitherto earmarked for Europe may be required elsewhere. This will necessitate an addition to European stocks of materiel, an expansion of the manpower reserve-base, and increased expenditures. In both Europe[56] and Japan the allied partners have already acknowledged the need for a greater naval contribution in their own regions, to compensate for U.S. deployments in the Indian Ocean.

The smaller powers have a number of advantages denied the United States that could contribute considerably to a Western policy. Their presence in the region is, inherently, less disruptive or polarizing. Countries like Iraq and Iran have specifically called for a greater European role as more acceptable than any

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other.[57] The European states may indeed cash in on their greater political distance from Israel in the interests of the alliance as a whole. They can in specific cases cultivate their bilateral relations with states in the region to enhance the vaunted division of labor. Britain's contribution in Oman is an example. Potentially, France's cultivation of Iraq, if pursued for alliance rather than narrowly national interests, could be beneficial in weakening the grip of the Soviet Union on that state. The historic roles of Britain in the Gulf and France in Djibouti allow them a presence that is less politically contentious than would be the case of a "new" power. France's military assets nearby[58] and the European's reputation for discretion could allow them to meet the lesser threats that these states may face.[59] Similarly, with less fanfare, European states could provide assistance in intelligence, oil-installation security, countersubversion, and riot-control techniques. In addition, by selling arms to states that require them—not in a competitive but a coordinated and integrated fashion—the European states could alleviate some of the pressures on the United States and assure a more rational means of enhancing their security. Military training, joint exercises, and the like would provide further signs of a European stake in the region.[60]

The European states have already moved to show the flag in the region. In addition to France and the United States, Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Holland had deployed limited numbers of naval vessels in the region by mid-1980. (Australia had expressed an interest in doing so.) These occasional deployments, if coordinated,[61] together with joint exercises can provide tangible evidence of a continuing multilateral interest in the region's security. An additional task for the Allies is less direct; a greater involvement in aid consortia for countries on the periphery of the region, specifically Turkey, but also Egypt.[62] Japan has an important role to play here.

The Western allies will dispose of numerous assets in dealing with the thorny issue of Gulf security. The basis for a true division of responsibilities that complement one another, and that uses their comparative advantage, exists. But a prerequisite for this is a sense that a collective approach will yield better and more secure results than alternative means. This calculation in turn revolves around perceptions of alliance leadership, the sense of trust and purpose that goes to the heart of alliance relations. Without a major improvement in alliance harmony, which recognizes the need for both restoring faith in its purposes and in redistributing members' roles within it, the prospects for a collective allied response to the new problems of Gulf security are dim indeed.

The conditions for a breakup of the alliance already exist in the Gulf. Some Gulf states are as receptive to dealing with Europe as a third force as some Europeans (especially France) are eager to pursue that role. The stakes in the region are high, and given an acute dependence on the region and on specific states, France may well pursue a unilateral policy, albeit rationalized, as a division of labor. This receptivity of the Gulf states is basically a result of a disillusionment with the United States. In the past the United States was seen by Saudi Arabia as the ultimate guarantor of its security. U.S. arms supplies implied a commitment; they reassured the recipient of a superpower's weight behind it; they signaled to the region its importance. In the wake of the Camp David agreement and the upheaval in Iran, relations with the United States appeared less advantageous. Its credibility as a security partner was impaired, and politically close ties with it became a liability, as the Palestinian issue fes-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tered. The very process of acquiring arms through a vocal Congress became an embarrassment. While continuing to crave reassurance, the Saudi regime became skeptical of its value but found no acceptable alternative. In this context, the Europeans became more attractive.[63] Willing to sell arms without a fuss, probably more dependable in meeting smaller threats discreetly, and prepared to make the right noises about Palestine, France in particular appeared an attractive partner to Saudi Arabia after 1979. A slight shift in Saudi orientation—toward nonalignment—thus became perceptible, and with it were enhanced the prospects for involvement in a "trilogue" and the French-sponsored "third force" idea.

France's motives for a unilateralist posture in the Middle East are not new. They go back to 1967 and relate to her calculations for meeting her energy needs.[64] In the aftermath of the 1974 oil embargo, France has persisted in the quest for securing dependable sources of supply in exchange for arms, technology, and diplomatic support. Iraq has been the principal object of this policy for understandable reasons: Iraq is most receptive to a third force idea, and supplies a growing proportion of France's oil imports.[65] In return for commitments of assured supplies, France has provided arms and a nuclear reactor to Baghdad. France has also endorsed Iraq's call for the neutralization of the Indian Ocean—that is, an exclusion of the navies of the superpowers from the region.[66] Particularly in this last area (but also in the controversial reactor sale), France has demonstrated a willingness, in the quest for bilateral deals, to impair collective policies and interests.

France has also wooed Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states. The possibility of arms sales to Saudi Arabia has recently been mooted, and France has encouraged Gulf states to establish ties free of the embarrassing U.S. connection. High-level visits by the president, prime minister, and defense minister have been continuing throughout the past year. France is careful to make apparent diplomatic concessions (e.g., the right of Palestinians to self-determination) unilaterally, as in Giscard's Gulf tour in March 1980. Even allowing for this French style, and accepting the fact that French actions in response to the oil crisis of 1979-80 are more oriented toward international policies,[67] the evidence of competitive French policies is compelling. The climate in the Gulf is also more receptive. The first task of the alliance must therefore be to restore unity sufficiently to impress upon its members the benefits of collective approaches to a joint concern. A parallel task will be to restore the credibility of the alliance and especially that of the United States as a partner for the states of the region.

If the alliance founders and collapses, owing to competitive policies and differing responses, to an impending threat, one may wonder what its fate may be when directly faced with that threat.

Even with success in the restoration of the military balance of power and in forging alliance unity, Western policies will be incomplete. In deterring enemies, reassuring allies, and providing time for both evolutionary change and a reduction in its vulnerability, the West will have deterred the exploitation of local instabilities and prevented a fundamental shift in the balance of power. How that time is used constitutes the second task of Western policy.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Living with instability is a condition from which there will be no escape in this region. But some instabilities are more tolerable than others. Devising a discriminating approach toward change will be a challenge that should be accepted. Avoiding the automatic equation of change with progress, and the twin excesses of rapidly embracing it or seeking to disassociate from former allies, will not be easy. In any event, the range of choice in terms of identifying regimes with values harmonious with the West will be limited. At the least, this should argue for an avoidance of guilt in dealing with the various regimes, and the United States should resist any tendency to see the degree of anti-Westernism of a particular regime as proof of its nationalistic authenticity.

The condition of change also requires an approach to the region that is long-term and sustained, that avoids seeing events as a gain or a loss and responding by dictation or abstention. Influence will be on a continuum, and setbacks can be reversed. This applies particularly in relation to Iran, but argues equally for a change in attitude toward other regimes in the area, such as the PDRY. A more integrated strategy of sustained involvement in the region should not accept reverses as permanent. Similarly, it should not seek short-term maximization of interests that hurt long-term needs. This requires a sensitivity to the needs of regional partners. Pressures on Saudi Arabia to increase oil production, to support unpopular diplomatic initiatives, to resist oil price increases (through excessive commercialism), or to recycle petrodollars do not necessarily enhance Saudi security. Any incentive to use Saudi Arabia as a regional power ought likewise to be resisted in the face of its palpable military weakness. Although access to oil is the immediate pressing issue, it is important that relations be put on a more balanced base. An equitable arrangement in which the Saudi population and the Arab peoples see tangible profit would considerably reduce the sense of exploitation that Arab Nationalists must feel about the relationship between Washington and Riyadh. Liberal transfer of technology, guarantees of investments (indexed to inflation), and sensitivity to Arab needs and priorities[68] may not prevent dissatisfaction with the West, but they may reduce somewhat the gap between regimes and peoples that is prevalent throughout the region, and lay a more permanent basis of mutual interest. The West's ability to compete favorably for influence in an atmosphere devoid of threat is generally recognized, but it is not automatic; it requires cultivation and a discipline[69] that looks at the Third World with genuine interest rather than with rhetorical genuflections to "pluralism." This is not a formula for deference but quite the reverse—a plea for recognition that power confers responsibility, and especially that perceptions of power and *how* things are done still matter in this part of the world.

References

The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the stimulation and ideas provided him by the participants in the workshop on Gulf Security organized by the European-American Institute on Security Affairs, held at Elvetham Hall, England, in June 1980.

[1]President Carter's State of the Union Address, January 23, 1980.

[2]I make no attempt in this paper to discuss those measures that can be undertaken to reduce Western vulnerability in the energy field; in conservation; development of alternative fuels; diversifying sources of oil dependency; or in means for managing crises, particularly enlarging the strategic stockpile; or buttressing international agreements on sharing resources. The focus here is on U.S. security interests in the Gulf region itself.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[3]Walter Levy, "Oil and the Decline of the West," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1980.

[4]Dependence on Gulf oil may be reduced by diversification of supplies, new discoveries, etc., but these need lead times of over a decade. Similarly, measures to reduce vulnerability in emergencies could be strengthened. The U.S. strategic stockpile is less than a tenth of its capacity (91.1 million barrels versus 1,000 million barrels).

[5]The real price before transportation is $1 a barrel.

[6]When production declined from 5.5 million barrels per day to less than 3 million. Continued deterioration rather than policy choice has further reduced it by a third.

[7]For a discussion, see Ray Dafter, "World Oil Production and Security of Supplies," *International Security*, Winter 1979-80, p. 154.

[8]See Albert Wohlstetter, "Half Wars and Half Policies in the Persian Gulf," European-American Institute, June 1980.

[9]There are, of course, variations within Europe. Italy, France, and Germany are very dependent, Britain far less so. Dependence on individual Gulf countries varies too, with France dependent on Iraq, Japan on Saudi Arabia.

[10]I am indebted to Peter Stratmann for this point.

[11]Allied comments about "not linking instabilities" are illustrative.

[12]The United States' excessive identification with Israel is seen as an additional liability in the Gulf.

[13]For a background, see Shahram Chubin, "Soviet Policy toward Iran and the Gulf," *Adelphi Paper* no. 157 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1980).

[14]Half the population of 36 million does not have Persian as a first language. The Kurds, Baluchi, and some of the Arabs are Sunni, not Shiite Muslims.

[15]See Shahram Chubin, "The Emerging Left in Iran," *Problems of Communism*, August-September 1980.

[16]See Shahram Chubin, "Iran-Arab Relations since the Iranian Revolution," paper presented to the Friedrich Ebert Institute, Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany, March 1980.

[17]Since Iran, with a population four times as large, has opted for such a figure, there is no reason to doubt that it could be done in Saudi Arabia.

[18]In mid-1980 Iran produced no more than 800,000 barrels per day from a prerevolutionary average of 5.9 million in 1978.

[19]This has improved somewhat in the past year, but is reflected in the lack of support for its initiative on regional security of November 1979, which was rejected as Western-inspired.

[20]See Wohlstetter, "Half Wars and Half Policies in the Persian Gulf."

[21]Western analysts often point to the new Iranian regime's hostility to the Soviet Union, neglecting to note that it is the relative balance between the two that is important.

[22]U.S. inhibitions during the unfolding Iranian crisis in 1978 arguably were increased as much by President Brezhnev's warning against interference (in November) as by the difficulties of applying military power.

[23]For example, using the Kurds and Baluchi as levers on Iran's good behavior.

[24]Such as the Iraqi Communist party, the Tudeh Iranian Communist party, and the Afghan Khalq.

[25]For example, support for the PDRY or for the Dhofar Liberation Front in Oman.

[26]An obvious notable example is the assistance given to the Iranian Left as well as to Khomeini by a number of Palestinian factions, as well as the PDRY, Libya, and Cuba.

[27]The trend toward nonalignment in the Gulf is not neutral in its consequences. Iraq's pursuit of a regional arrangement in its Arab Charter (proposed in February 1980) is based on the premise of the exclusion of the superpowers from the region, the elimination of foreign bases, etc. This type of arrangement is clearly attractive to the Soviet Union, which is thereby advantaged.

[28]With reference, for example, to the contested Article VI of the Soviet-Iran Treaty of 1921, which makes some—by no means clear—reference to certain Soviet rights to assure that Iran is not used as a base of aggression against the Soviet Union.

[29]In the longer run, should the Islamic regime consolidate itself and seek to export its ideals to its Muslim brethren in the north, the Soviet Union may be expected to respond decisively.

[30]And the threat of support for them used as pressure against governments.

[31]The Communist party has built up a strong presence in the Iranian oil fields and the armed forces.

[32]Stanley Hoffmann is the most eloquent spokesman. See his "Muscles and Brains" *Foreign Policy* no. 37 (Winter 1979–80); "The Case of Dr. Kissinger," *New York Review of Books*, December 6, 1979; and "Reflections on the Present Danger," *New York Review of Books*, March 6, 1980.

[33]See Stanley Hoffmann, "The Crisis in the West," *New York Review of Books*, July 17, 1980.

[34]*The New York Times*, February 29, 1980.

[35]For example, Yalta, which legitimized the Soviet Union's right to participate in Eastern Europe, with unanticipated consequences.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[36]See *Tass*, February 27, 1980 (Portugalov proposal).

[37]These discussions are usually linked with such ill-conceived ventures as the Indian Ocean Arms Limitation Talks, or tied to proposals by some of the littoral states advocating an Indian Ocean "zone of peace." Obviously, any proposal constraining Western abilities to balance Soviet land and air power by sea power are welcome in Moscow.

[38]To demonstrate its dependability, the West must show that it will remain involved in the region for some time.

[39]Wohlstetter, "Half Wars and Half Policies in the Persian Gulf."

[40]Why defense of the Persian Gulf, by articulating doctrines and brandishing nuclear weapons, should be effective, while so much effort has had to be expended in maintaining balances on multiple levels in Europe to maintain deterrence, is unclear to me.

[41]I have not discussed this problem at length, because it is generally well known that the local states are reluctant to become associated with the West formally, partly owing to the nominal dictates of nonalignment, partly to susceptibility to pressure from other states. Western dependability has not been such as to induce them to run the risks of ignoring these. They are aware that the military guarantees may be costly to them in political terms before the contingency for which they are intended arrives.

[42]Currently, a two-carrier task force on permanent station in the Indian Ocean, an increase since November 1979 from the routine deployment of one carrier rotated into the area for three months every two years.

[43]See Geoffrey Kemp, "Middle East Oil Supplies: The Role of Military Force in Deterring and Preventing Interruption" (mimeo. June 1980).

[44]Broadcasting solidarity with a local partner to other disrupters, including domestic opponents.

[45]Similarly, as Bill Quandt has argued, the recipients' interest in political reliability over military efficiency ought to be accepted, in *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, May 26, 1980, p. 79.

[46]Arguably, it may also show that the supplier can be "blackmailed," but this, in my view, is not an accurate reflection of the Saudi position vis-à-vis the United States.

[47]An exception was Iran's decision in 1970 to withdraw its claim to Bahrain through the instrumentality of the United Nations. The claim appears to have been revived by the revolutionary government.

[48]For example, Saudi Arabia's susceptibility to Arab pressure, particularly on Palestine; or the importance of the issue of Jerusalem to the "Keeper of the Holy Places."

[49]Including the avoidance of leaks damaging to partners.

[50]While the OECD area as a whole reduced its oil imports by 2.3 percent between 1973 and 1978, U.S. consumption increased by 11.8 percent. U.S. alarm regarding events in the Gulf was thus seen by some as excessive and a substitute for devising a real energy policy at home. In short, the pressures on oil were in part of U.S. making.

[51]No single action will quickly change the atmosphere, which will need time to improve.

[52]See James G. Roche, "Emerging Soviet Global Military Capabilities," European-American Institute, June 1980.

[53]In addition to a $295 million contribution (equal to the United States) in a multinational aid consortium, the Federal Republic of Germany has offered an arms package of approximately $500 million spread over several years, to include *Leopard* tanks, *Milan* and *Starfighter* aircraft, and the means of upgrading weapons already in Turkey's possession.

[54]Suggestions vary as to the best procedures; from a "directoire" of the major European states plus Japan, through the use of Four-Power summits and economic summits.

[55]Including improved means of sharing allocations of oil in emergencies.

[56]Most recently in July, the Federal Republic of Germany has extended its patrols in the North Atlantic.

[57]Admittedly seeking thereby to accentuate differences within the alliance.

[58]In Djibouti, France has some four thousand soldiers. In addition, she has four frigates and a command-ship on permanent deployment in the Indian Ocean, with access to a base in *Reunion*.

[59]For example, France is believed to have provided limited assistance in the Mecca mosque episode of November 1979.

[60]In June 1980 the Federal Republic of Germany offered to provide Saudi Arabia with training areas for its air force. Saudi Arabia is believed to be considering the purchase of German *Leopard* tanks.

[61]The coordination of French naval deployments with that of the United States is reputed to be excellent. President Carter in January 1980 specifically referred to the need for "coordination" of efforts with nations outside the region but heavily dependent on its oil. *The New York Times*, January 30, 1980.

[62]Egypt has not been discussed, but its relationship to Western interests in the Gulf is considerable. It has offered to assist Gulf states to combat subversion or aggression. Egyptian interventions would be far less obtrusive than Western military interventions. In addition, Egypt has provided

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

facilities to enhance access to the region. Egypt's stability is therefore important and requires considerable infusions of economic assistance.

[63]Potentially, the Federal Republic of Germany has an important role to play. There are ten thousand Germans in Saudi Arabia, which provides 24 percent of Germany's oil imports. Germany is the Kingdom's third largest trading partner. A more active German role in the region might be welcomed.

[64]For an excellent discussion, see Robert J. Lieber "Economics, Energy and Security in Alliance Perspective," *International Security*, 4 (4) (Spring 1980): 139–63.

[65]These have risen from 20 million tons per year in 1978 to 30 million tons per year in 1980. See Ibid., p. 150.

[66]See *International Herald Tribune*, July 7, 1980. France excludes her own navy, which has a "traditional" presence.

[67]As Lieber argues in "Economics, Energy and Security," p. 152.

[68]Especially those between the smaller Gulf states who are not highly armed, or those between similarly oriented regimes, like Oman and Saudi Arabia in the past.

[69]For example, the Iran-Iraq accord of March 1975.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PAUL JABBER

U.S. Interests and Regional Security in the Middle East

> Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.
>
> President Carter, in his "State of the Union" address, January 1980

As a new decade begins, the state of flux that afflicts American foreign and defense policies generally is particularly evident in the U.S. approach to the Middle East. Recent years have brought new threats and challenges in this important and complex region, where the major sources of imported energy for the industrial world lie, newly emergent states seek to assert themselves amid a welter of crisscrossing national, religious, ethnic, and territorial conflicts, and vigorous Soviet-American competition for political influence and strategic advantage has continued unabated since 1945. These have generated a widely felt need, not merely for a reappraisal of past policies and the instrumentalities of their execution, but also for quick, decisive, and far-reaching action. In response to this mood, and perceiving both a critically magnified menace to vital regional interests from the direction of the Soviet Union and a host of unfavorable developments and trends within the Middle East itself, the U.S. government opened the 1980s by enunciating a new doctrine that presaged a major expansion of this country's political and military presence in that area and a deepening involvement in its tumultuous affairs and uncertain fate.

President Carter's assertion of his readiness to use force to protect the strategic Middle East sources of about half the oil available in the noncommunist world was specifically addressed to the need to ward off Soviet designs on the Persian Gulf. Clearly, however, its spirit and the overall context in which it was made extend its effective intent beyond the Gulf. It embraces a wide expanse whose outer limits are undefined, but which includes the Arabian peninsula generally and encompasses also Pakistan, Iran, and East Africa. Although the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was its immediate motivator, the doctrine is a response to what has been perceived as a steady growth since the mid-1970s of the Soviet presence not only in the Middle East, but in critical areas of Asia and Africa as well. This has been achieved through an increasingly bold injection of Russian military personnel and equipment, often supplemented by troops from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cuba and other Soviet satellites. The new U.S. posture is also meant as reassurance to friendly states in these areas that the United States will not tolerate further Soviet inroads, and that America's post-Vietnam reluctance to risk military engagement abroad is at an end.

To put teeth into this newfound resolve and make it credible to friends and foes alike, the Carter Administration quickly launched a four-pronged effort to improve U.S. military capabilities, with emphasis on enhancing its ability to project power into Southwest Asia. This effort includes a significant, though not overly large, increase in the defense budget, from about 3 percent in real growth in fiscal year 1980 to a projected 5 to 6 percent in 1981 and subsequent years; speeding up the planned creation of a specialized Rapid Deployment Force that would draw on dedicated units from all four military services; preparations for the possible reintroduction of military conscription; and negotiation of rights to the use of military facilities of countries in the vicinity of the Gulf for the deployment of U.S. forces. A fifth element might be added—the expansion of our new arms supply relationship with Egypt to meet President Sadat's apparent desire to convert Egypt into a regional guardian of anti-Soviet regimes.

This was a rather wide-ranging set of initiatives by an administration regarded by many segments of domestic opinion as well-meaning but insufficiently assertive and effective in its conduct of foreign affairs, particularly in its relations with the other superpower. With the partial exception of draft registration, these measures have met with general approval in an often recalcitrant Congress and among the public. The country appears ready to support a major expansion in defense outlays and new foreign commitments that could lead to extended military involvement overseas, even, remarkably enough, in a period of rampant inflation, injurious decline in standards of living, and continued citizen mistrust of the wisdom and leadership of our national authorities.

Clearly, the convergence of U.S. perceptions of increased strategic military vulnerability to the Soviet Union, the overthrow of a regime in Iran that had been perceived as a stabilizing force in the oil-rich Gulf and the ensuing confrontation with the revolutionary leadership in Tehran, the sudden invasion of Afghanistan by eighty thousand Soviet troops, and the heightened sense of long-term dependence on vital energy supplies from the Middle East has created a demand, and a major opportunity, for a substantial overhaul in the American approach to the defense of its regional interests. In their general outlines, the security-related initiatives of the Carter Administration are not a temporary palliative, nor is their continuation likely to depend on the identity of the occupant of the Oval Office. They foreshadow an extended operational commitment and an enhanced regional military presence for as long as the Middle East remains a principal source of oil supply for the industrial world.

Their success, however, is far from assured and certainly not dependent on U.S. will alone. In an area as fragmented, unstable, politicized, and wary of, as well as vulnerable to, external intrusions as is the Middle East, a defense policy that relies in the main on a military instrumentality to create collective security is bound to prove inadequate, unless the political foundations, on which any multinational effort must rest, are solid. The record of American Middle East policy since World War II strongly suggests that the *real* regional security challenge for the United States lies in a proper orchestration of military implements,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the one hand, and political relationships with our regional partners on the other. This is a most difficult task. But it is indispensable if the regional use of U.S. military power—whether for deterrent or defensive purposes—is not to be frustrated in the moment of need by the unwillingness or inability of local governments to do their share.

U.S. Interests, U.S. Dilemmas

Strategically situated astride three continents and holding the largest petroleum reserves in the world, the Middle East has long been a busy arena for Great Power rivalries and a target of Great Power influence. Successive U.S. administrations have identified regional American interests as secure access to oil, both for this country and for its major allies; containment of Soviet influence; since 1948, the survival and prosperity of Israel; and, increasingly, the promotion of friendly relations and economic ties with the Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Over the past decade a fifth interest—the avoidance of major regional war, specifically an Arab-Israeli war—may be said to have emerged as a crucial policy objective. Growing awareness since 1973 of the disastrous effects a Middle East conflict might have on the whole range of U.S. regional stakes and purposes has turned avoidance of such a contingency into a matter of continued highest priority. Reflective of this is the vigor and persistence with which the last two administrations, but Carter's in particular, have engaged in Arab-Israeli peace diplomacy. The stationing of some two hundred American technicians in Sinai since 1975 to monitor troop disengagements, and the "full partnership" role assumed in the negotiation and implementation of the Israel-Egypt peace treaty of March 1979—of which the United States is now *de facto* a full guarantor—attest to the depth of our involvement in managing and containing this dispute.

At the start of the eighties the United States finds itself committed both politically and militarily as never before to a variety of active regional roles. It also finds itself confronted with critical challenges simultaneously in all major issue areas that have defined the international politics of that region since World War II: nationalism, Soviet expansionism, and the Palestinian issue.

Islam and Nationalism

In its confrontation with revolutionary Iran since the fall of the Pahlevi monarchy in early 1979, American policy faces, however lightly, and sometimes misleadingly, disguised in clerical garb, the same phenomenon of virulent anti-foreign, self-assertive nationalism encountered in earlier decades, both in Iran during the heady years of Premier Mohammed Mosaddeq's regime in 1951-53 and in the pan-Arab movement that later flourished through much of the region under the leadership of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser. The hostility that, not without good reason, Iranians exhibit toward the United States, and the Soviets and British as well, is likely to continue to express itself in a variety of ways for quite some time. It is part and parcel of the very ethos of the revolution, an ethos shaped not so much by an outburst of renewed religious fervor or by specific grievances, as by a generalized popular and elite reaction to what is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perceived as a long history of manipulation by, and subservience to, the will of external powers.

The Islamic revival apparent throughout much of the Middle East and South Asia, fueled by a self-confidence born of oil leverage, is far from an obscurantist, "irrational" urge to turn back the clock domestically. Nor is it a call to renewal of the religious wars of medieval vintage between Islam and the infidels. In an era of increasing multipolarity and diffusion of military and economic power, it is a proclamation of independence from superpower blocs, a bid for equal status with other global groupings and autonomy in the management of intra-Islamic affairs, and—internally—an assertion of the validity and appropriateness for the modern world of autochthonous institutions and procedures. Hence the call for neutrality between the Soviet and Western spheres, for Islamic solidarity, even for an Islamic nuclear deterrent. Hence, too, the violent resistance within Afghanistan to the new Communist leadership that came to power in the anti-Daud coup of April 1978, which instituted reforms widely perceived as alien in inspiration and character while opening the country to a degree of Soviet intrusion that seriously threatened its independence.

Soviet Expansionism

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought to the fore, in acute and dramatic fashion, renewed concern over Russia's designs in the Middle East. Such massive intervention in a country not formally a member of the Socialist bloc or the Warsaw Pact set new precedents for Soviet military behavior. Equally alarming was the demonstration of Moscow's ability to project large military forces quickly by land and air into new areas, and its willingness to do so.

The Afghan action took place in a context of significant perceived change in the overall conventional military balance between the superpowers in favor of the Soviet Union, and it came on the heels of repeated instances of military involvement by Soviet proxies in Angola, Ethiopia, and South Yemen. Assessments of the "meaning of Afghanistan" as a guidepost to future Soviet conduct in the Third World generally, and Southwest Asia in particular, vary. Some regard it as marking only the beginning of a new era of bold Soviet military activism, prompted by a political system that is predatory by nature and ideology and encouraged by American laxness in maintaining a credible balance of military power. Kabul, in this view, is only a way station to Tehran, Kuwait, and Riyadh, and the oil sources of the region, the Kremlin's real objective.

A less alarmist perspective, which I share, views the central balance as retaining its basic stability, and interprets the Soviet move as a reaction to a mix of threats and favorable circumstances, undertaken primarily for defensive purposes, and bereft neither of the caution, nor the opportunism, that have traditionally characterized Soviet behavior in the Middle East. Moscow's interest in a country that shares extensive borders with the Soviet Union, and whose population has religious, cultural, and ethnic ties with the citizens of the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union, has been consistently strong for many decades. Its influence in Kabul traditionally has exceeded Washington's, as has the flow of Soviet development aid and military assistance. Significantly, of all the so-called Northern Tier countries bordering on the Soviet Union from Tur-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

key to Pakistan, Afghanistan alone never has been a part of any Western-sponsored regional security system. Poor in resources, geographically remote, and politically inward-looking, Afghanistan was never considered to be critical to U.S. interests. Reflective of this attitude was the lack of significant reaction by the United States to the 1978 coup that brought the strongly Marxist People's Democratic Party to power or to the buildup of Soviet advisory personnel in the Afghan armed forces and civilian bureaucracy that soon followed.

Thus the Soviets formulated their decision regarding Afghanistan with a different calculus than would be used in any decision to invade Pakistan or Iran or to threaten with military force any of the Arab oil-producing states. Regardless of their basic motivation, however, the fact remains that the occupation of Afghanistan has brought Soviet armor and air power within striking distance of the West's major source of imported energy. The revolutionary turmoil in Iran and the presence of increasingly restive ethnic minorities astride the borders of Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are bound to create in the eighties numerous circumstances favorable to increases in Soviet influence, if not outright military intervention. Elementary prudence dictates a new strategic requirement for fashioning a regional U.S. defense posture that assures effective deterrence.

The Palestinian Issue

The need for enhancing regional security is appropriately considered by U.S. decisionmakers to require the cooperation of local governments and America's major partners in the Western Alliance. The current period, however, is marked by serious continued disagreement between the United States and the Arab world, and growing divergence within the alliance over the vexing Palestinian issue that may render moot any serious efforts at collective defense.

American support of the establishment of Israel by the United Nations in 1948 and the strong diplomatic and military backing subsequently extended to it have placed relations between the United States and Arab countries in a permanent state of crisis. This crisis became particularly pronounced in the wake of the June 1967 war, which resulted in major Israeli territorial conquests, turned the United States into Israel's major arms supplier, and promoted the emergence of the Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organization as a major political force in the region. Arab insistence that any political solution to the conflict with Israel must include, in addition to practically total devolution of lands occupied in 1967, an arrangement on the West Bank and Gaza that satisfies Palestinian demands for self-determination, derives from a variety of motives. Some are deep-rooted, widely shared, and of long standing, basically religious (Jerusalem as an Islamic holy city) or ideological (Palestine as part and parcel of the Arab national homeland) in nature. Others are more immediate and practical, such as the concern of countries holding large Palestinian refugee or *émigré* communities about the impact of frustrated Palestinian political aspirations on internal stability. All are potent and mutually reinforcing.

In recent years even regimes—such as those of Saudi Arabia and Jordan—that have traditionally relied on American support to balance pressures from radical Arab forces have found association with any U.S. policy ventures extremely hazardous politically, and often intrinsically unpalatable on deeply felt

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

patriotic and religious grounds. This is clearly exemplified in the general and active opposition to the Camp David accords of September 1978 and Washington's subsequent peace diplomacy. These were widely interpreted in the Arab world as intended only to draw Egypt out of the conflict and eliminate any credible Arab military options against Israel, while leaving the latter in secure control of Jerusalem and most other occupied areas. It is also manifest in the diffidence with which the Saudis have met post-Afghanistan proposals for regional defense in spite of their acute concern over Soviet intentions.

The present conjunction of urgent policy demands in regard both to Soviet containment and the Arab-Israeli arena, against a background of nationalist ferment in Iran and elsewhere, highlights one major, if not the basic, dilemma that has bedeviled U.S. management of its Middle Eastern interests since the late 1940s. How can the United States effectively constrain Soviet penetration of the region while pursuing a course in Arab-Israeli affairs that antagonizes almost every local government and renders normal political relations, let alone military cooperation, extremely difficult and always subject to sudden interruption?

The transfer of control over the extraction and pricing of oil from the international oil companies to the producer governments over the past decade—dramatized by the emergence of OPEC—has created a second, overlapping dilemma that will become increasingly untenable as the 1980s wear on. It derives from the fact that over the coming decade the Arab oil producers will be expected to satisfy an even larger percentage of U.S. and other world demand than at present. How, then, are we to induce them to export sufficient oil to satisfy the West's requirements, even when the requisite high extraction rates may be contrary to their own perceived economic self-interest, again while maintaining a stance on the principal regional political issue that these governments consider decidedly hostile, even, in some cases, threatening to their very survival?

The traditional American approach, only rarely successful, has been to seek to insulate Arab-Israeli problems from other regional issues. Such insulation became extremely difficult once the "oil weapon" was effectively wielded for the first time in the October 1973 war and Arab power and self-assurance mushroomed in its aftermath. Kissinger understood this, as did his successors. Since 1973 U.S. diplomacy has been heavily and almost constantly engaged in peace efforts mandated by the absolute necessity to avoid further Arab-Israeli warfare. But it has also consistently shied away from facing squarely the fundamental crux of the conflict: the future of the Palestinians and the framing of an acceptable *modus vivendi* between them and Israel.

The Carter Administration's peace efforts of the past three years provide a signal example of this failure of political will. The Camp David approach yielded a landmark achievement for the United States with the conclusion of an effective treaty of peace and normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt. It assured the security of Israel, a fundamental U.S. concern, and made possible the rapid development of a substantial security relationship with the largest Arab state. Egypt's strategic location in the heart of the Middle East, and its varied and well-developed military infrastructure, including numerous airfields and naval facilities, can be extremely useful in any regional defense scheme. However, the manifest American inability to fulfill the promise of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Camp David where Palestinian "autonomy" is concerned casts serious doubts on the permanence of these gains or the constancy and determination with which any U.S. government can pursue its broader Middle East interests where this issue is concerned.

Containment Revisited

It is often remarked that the making of American foreign policy suffers from a heavy, and perhaps systemically unavoidable, handicap: the poverty, if not downright lack, of institutional memory. The revolving-door manner in which political and managerial positions in the upper rungs of the executive hierarchy are staffed; the concentration of true decision-making power in the White House rather than in the specialized bureaucracies with their career personnel; and the constant exposure of the president and his small coterie of key advisors to the myriad demands and often conflicting interests of a variegated national constituency, all militate against the functioning of an effective learning process.

Second, and equally apposite, is the tendency of Americans to meet foreign policy challenges with quick, massive technological responses, often involving military instruments, always requiring heavy financial outlays, with only secondary, almost incidental attention given to the international political matrix in which they are to be embedded. All too often U.S. leaders have behaved as if all that was needed for success was for the United States to do something, make a "grand entrance," and the remaining pieces would fall neatly in place. In so doing they have responded to, and reflected the expectations of, our activist, optimistic society. But the result often has been that foreign policy ventures hastily embarked on needlessly repeated previous errors and incurred superfluous high costs, either in invested capital or forgone advantages, or both.

The new Carter plans for organizing Middle East defense run a high risk of falling into these same pitfalls. They are "new" only in a chronological sense. In substance, premises, and purpose they are strikingly similar to failed policies of the past, from the MEDO (Middle East Defense Organization), Baghdad Pact, and Eisenhower Doctrine ideas of the 1950s to the Islamic Pact of the 1960s and the regional applications of the Nixon Doctrine in the 1970s. All these programs, some implemented, others—like MEDO—stillborn, were intended to protect Western interests against impending threats from the Soviet Union and/or regional surrogates. They suffered from two critical weaknesses: incorrect assessment of the nature of the threat they were invoked to forestall; and insufficient attention to the priorities, interests, and perceptions of our putative regional partners in defense planning, whose willing contribution we knew was essential, and whose vital security was to be engaged.

The Soviet Threat

Beginning with Stalin's attempt in 1946 to set up an Azerbaijani satellite state in northern Iran and Moscow's postwar pressures on Ankara to grant the Soviets a privileged position in the Turkish straits, the U.S. government in its operational planning has consistently assessed the Soviet threat in the Middle East as primarily one of massive conventional attack. It has portrayed the over-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all Soviet purpose in rather cataclysmic terms, ranging from ideological communizing of the region to its political satellization, and, increasingly, the physical take-over by force of the oilfields in the Gulf.

Naturally, there have been periods when perceptions of the relative power balance (as in the "favorable" years, from the Cuban missile crisis to the end of the 1960s) or the spirit of the times (as in the halcyon years of détente) encouraged a less sweeping, more nuanced interpretation of Soviet objectives. But these have been exceptions. The current post-Afghanistan view of the Soviets as doctrinaire, pugnacious, fundamentally aggressive, and bent on world conquest is the consensus image of the adversary that has prevailed within the national security establishment and among the political elites that have occupied high office over the past three and a half decades.

This continuity is strikingly overlooked in much of the contemporary debate over Middle East defense. Also overlooked, at times even by high-level policymakers who presumably should know better, are the fact that the U.S. government has long identified protection of the Middle East generally, and the oil-producing areas in particular, as vital national interests, and the heavy record of U.S. efforts to guard against Soviet inroads there. A policy determination that "the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and of the Middle East is vital to the security of the United States" was first made in 1946, at the time of the Azerbaijan crisis, and was formally relayed to our British allies in 1947, after review and endorsement by President Truman. The memorandum went on to assert that

> the security of the whole Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East would be jeopardized if the Soviet Union should succeed in its efforts to obtain control of any one of the following countries: Italy, Greece, Turkey, or Iran. In view of the foregoing, it should be the policy of the United States . . . to support the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. . . . In carrying out this policy the United States should be prepared to make full use of its political, economic, and, if necessary, military power in such manner as may be found most effective.[1]

In February 1950, in a celebrated speech at the White House that sought to define the "defense perimeter" of the United States, Secretary of State Dean Acheson asserted, "The only way to deal with the Soviet Union, we have found from experience, is to create situations of strength."[2] If so, a Council on Foreign Relations publication shortly pointed out, the Middle East was

> a region that seemed to call preeminently for creating a "situation of strength" . . . [for it] seemed almost to invite a Soviet push that would split the free world along its North-South axis, deny it the abundant oil resources of Iran, Iraq, and the Arabian peninsula, and open a path for the extension of Soviet influence westward across Africa and eastward into Pakistan and India.[3]

The Militarization of Policy

The twin threats of the Red Army and communist subversion dictated containment. The thorough militarization of U.S. foreign policy that ensued, and the interpretive and conceptual straitjacket into which subsequent perceptions of Soviet behavior in the Middle East and elsewhere were forced, produced a regional policy that became obsessed with building security links and enforcing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ideological conformity, regardless of costs or consequence. The creation of a U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean in 1949 was followed by the expansion of NATO to include Greece and Turkey in 1953, and the founding of the Baghdad Pact (later CENTO) around Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan in 1955. In the wake of Suez came the Eisenhower Doctrine, enunciated in March 1957, which reaffirmed U.S. willingness to use military power in defense of its Middle Eastern interests:

> The United States regards as vital to the national interest and world peace the preservation of the independence and integrity of the nations of the Middle East. To this end, if the President determines the necessity thereof, the United States is prepared to use armed forces to assist such nation or group of such nations requesting assistance against aggression from any country controlled by international communism.[4]

Then came the landing of twelve thousand U.S. marines in Lebanon in the summer of 1958; veiled threats of intervention in Syria in 1957 and in Jordan in 1958; the maintenance, in some cases until the early 1970s, of Western military bases in Jordan, Iraq, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Aden; the arming and encouragement of anti-Soviet regional hegemons in Iran and Israel over the past decade under the Nixon Doctrine of 1969; and the extension, throughout the postwar period, of billions of dollars in security-related assistance to the region.

Local governments were befriended, and economic and military aid lavished on them if they proved willing to join Western defense alliances; vilified, and often covertly undermined, if they refused. Regimes that loudly proclaimed their anticommunism, such as that of the Shah Mohammed Pahlevi in Iran, were staunchly supported and often actively protected against their domestic opposition, regardless of their frequently reactionary and despotic character or dubious legitimacy in the eyes of their own populace. Political leaderships and movements that sought to carve out an autonomous path in foreign affairs or avowed an interest in socialism—among them Mosaddeq's in Iran and Nasser's in Egypt—were discounted a priori as Moscow's minions or treated with mistrust and scarcely veiled hostility.

Had containment in the Middle East worked, its costs might have been justified. Hefty foreign aid bills, overt and covert meddling in other countries' internal affairs, the antagonizing of Third World nationalists, even close association with unsavory foreign governments, all are warranted if essential to the national security. But containment failed. Starting from naught in 1948, the political influence and military presence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, south and central Asia, the Indian Ocean, and the Horn of Africa steadily expanded over the past three decades. Containment failed, not because the remedies used were necessarily inappropriate, but because the diagnosis of the disease was faulty.

In fact, irony of ironies, any close scrutiny of Moscow's Middle East performance will quickly reveal that the Soviets scored their major gains by capitalizing on political opportunities afforded by the struggle between local nationalists, zealous in their newly acquired independence, and Western powers bent on enlisting them in Cold War ventures. Soviet victories were largely achieved, not in spite of Western regional defensive efforts, but because of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them. And, where Moscow has suffered reverses, some—as in Sadat's Egypt—of enormous strategic import, they did not result from Western exercise of military muscle, but because the Soviets ran afoul of local interests and aspirations, and in spite of highly conflictual relations at the time between their clients and the United States.

While the United States under successive administrations travailed to create "situations of strength" in the area against Soviet military aggression, its national security managers failed to recognize that Soviet behavior did not fit the expected mold, that Moscow's record in the region by any reckoning could hardly be classified as aggressively militaristic, rashly adventurous, or driven by an ideological zeal for world revolution. On the contrary, the consensus view of most competent Western students of Soviet policy in the Middle East points to limited Soviet objectives, pursued cautiously and conservatively, with the stress on pragmatic state interests rather than ideology, and an oft-proved willingness to withdraw from established positions, some acquired at great expense, rather than risk confrontation.[5]

Time and again, scoring strategic gains—such as access to port facilities for their navy and/or denying it to Western fleets—or cultivating regimes that do not align their foreign policies with those of the anti-Soviet coalition have had precedence over ideological kinship or doctrinal obstacles in determining Soviet behavior. Russo-Turkish relations provide a good example of the highly pragmatic quality of Moscow's approach. The Kremlin was even willing to overlook Ankara's membership in NATO and the presence of U.S. military bases in Anatolia in favor of a policy of wooing the Turks away from the United States through trade and normalization of relations. It adopted a similar conciliatory stance and fostered a network of economic relationships with the Shah's regime in Iran, despite the latter's virulent anticommunism. The Soviets developed generally cooperative and cordial government-to-government relations throughout the area, despite the harsh treatment meted out to local Communists and other Marxists, no less by revolutionary Algeria, Egypt, or Iraq than by the conservative monarchy in Morocco.

The pivotal Arab-Israeli conflict more than any other factor has provided conditions conducive to the spread of Soviet influence, and again exemplifies Soviet flexibility and opportunism. Prompted by what was perceived as a strategic opportunity to weaken drastically, if not destroy, the British and general Western positions in the Arab and Islamic worlds, Moscow's sudden support for Zionism was crucial to the passage of the Palestine partition resolution by the General Assembly in November 1947, which laid the legal grounds for Israel's establishment. The following May the Soviet Union was second only to the United States among the major powers in recognizing the new state of Israel, and the first government to extend *de jure* recognition to it. Within two years, however, Soviet policy was beginning a turnaround that would bring it into full alignment with the Arab side by the mid-1950s and allow Moscow to capitalize on the widening breach in Arab-Western relations caused by the establishment of Israel.

There followed staunch support for the Arabs at the United Nations and in all other diplomatic forums, strong backing for their Egyptian and Syrian clients in the 1956, 1967, and 1973 wars with Israel, which in each case included

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

threats of resort to force, when needed to limit Arab territorial losses, and even the commitment of Soviet troops to combat in the 1970 war to protect the Egyptian heartland. Yet, Soviet exploitation of the conflict has remained carefully constrained by significant self-imposed limitations. These include careful dissociation from the more extreme and irredentist Arab demands on Israel, qualitative restraints in weapons supplies that have denied their clients the capacity to wage a winning offensive war against Israel, and a willingness to endure major—even humiliating—setbacks, such as their mass eviction from Egypt in 1972, in preference to actions that might leave them overexposed.

In sum, the record shows that the Soviets do not expect to be able to communize the Middle East (in fact, its socioeconomic conditions have disqualified it all along in Marxist literature as fertile ground for a proletarian revolution), have no desire to be saddled with the costs and aggravation of entanglement in its numerous crisscrossing disputes and rivalries, nor do they realistically believe they can turn it into an exclusive Soviet sphere of influence. In a region that girds the "soft underbelly" of their industrial heartland, their aim since their initial breakthrough into Egypt in 1955 has been primarily defensive, and eminently traditional in a *Realpolitik* sense: to gain a regional role that would enable them to neutralize any Western efforts to mount a security threat from the Middle East, and exploit any opportunities that might arise to play imperial power politics, while limiting the risks and keeping a wary eye on the posture and reactions of the other superpower.

The purpose of this analysis is not to discount the utility of military deterrence in the Middle East or to argue that Soviet aims would have remained limited and defensive in default of a Western armed presence there. No brief is made here for those who might hold a benign view of Soviet objectives toward a region that contains such vast strategic and resource assets, historically has been the target of imperial Muscovite ambitions for centuries, and lies immediately adjacent to the territory of an increasingly strong and assertive Soviet Union. Moreover, the relevance of past experience for current policy guidance admittedly is tempered by the very large increase the Soviet Union has wrought over the last decade in its force projection capabilities.

What this analysis does suggest is that the overmilitarization of policy in the past proved counterproductive. As the United States prepares again to meet a potential Soviet threat with a panoply of bases, facilities, and new, dedicated combat structures, there is a clear need for subtlety, for political acumen, and for careful, measured diplomacy to go along with—indeed, to condition and discipline—the flexing of military muscle. A security structure that emphasizes military implements and induces primary reliance on the generation of fighting capabilities, but is not well anchored in stable, cooperative, and mutually beneficial political relationships among its component parts will be forever vulnerable to sudden breakup, easily exploitable by the Soviets, unreliable in times of crisis—at worst, downright self-defeating.

Regional defense measures proved inadequate in the past whenever the requirements of their implementation clashed with the political priorities of local partners. Collective security plans were frustrated, it should be noted, in a period when Western navies roamed Middle Eastern waters unchallenged and the central strategic balance was decidedly favorable to the West. If more attention

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the interests, perceptions, and domestic political needs of Middle Eastern governments would have spared us disappointments then, it clearly will be indispensable in the 1980s. The proliferation of modern military arsenals throughout the region, the economic and diplomatic leverage accruing to many regional governments through "petrowealth," and the diffusion of international power in its diverse facets, owing to increasing global interdependence and essential military equivalence between the two major blocs, are factors that limit as never before U.S. coercive abilities and place this country and its regional interlocutors on more equal bargaining terms. U.S. policy preferences will be accommodated and cooperation extended only in the measure that local concerns are addressed. Opportunities for further Soviet inroads into the Arabian peninsula generally, and in the small sheikhdoms along the western and southern shores of the Gulf in particular, are likely to increase if our regional defense efforts bring internal unrest in their trail; if they compromise local regimes of already suspect legitimacy in the eyes of powerful regional neighbors; or if they are aggressively pressed on Middle Eastern governments while we continue to pursue other regional policies—primarily on the Palestinian issue—that run directly counter to their national goals.

Regional Perceptions of the Soviet Threat

But, one might ask, are the Saudis, Kuwaitis, and others unaware of an impending Soviet threat that necessitates collective action? Is it not *their* sovereignty and *their* one precious natural resource that are directly at risk? Why should Washington need to use any persuasion whatever to elicit cooperation? Despite some rumbles of concern over Soviet intentions, emanating primarily from Riyadh in the aftermath of the Afghanistan invasion, the reactions of Gulf oil producers to U.S. defense proposals have been less than overwhelming. Only Oman, which fears a renewal of South Yemeni pressure in the Dhofar region, and, farther afield, Somalia, which is hopeful of enlisting U.S. support in its intermittent conflict with Ethiopia over the Ogaden, and Egypt have welcomed a more visible local military role for the United States and offered facilities on their territory for this purpose.

Saudi Arabia, "the centerpiece of American interest," in the words of a U.S. undersecretary of state,[6] does not wish to be formally associated with American defense planning, although it would make installations available in case of military emergency. The Kuwaitis have been rather vociferous in their opposition to an expanded U.S. military presence in the Gulf waters. Ba'thist Iraq, the second largest OPEC oil producer, and fast becoming perhaps the strongest Arab military power, is vehemently opposed to any foreign military presence in the area, whether from East or West.

In recent years most Gulf states have procured sufficient military strength that any invasion attempt aimed at seizure and effective control of their territory would require both a major commitment of forces by the attacker and a military operation of very large logistic and materiel proportions. Military self-reliance in the face of the Red Army is not what comforts the Arabian peninsula states, however. In their estimate, far more important than any calculations of indigenous deterrence in affecting the likelihood of Soviet attack is the profound

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and unambiguous interlocking that has taken place in the economic and energy spheres between them and the industrial world. This mutual dependence between the Gulf and the major industrial countries is, and will remain for the balance of this decade and beyond, of such critical dimensions that any Soviet encroachment would engage the vital interests of the West in a most immediate and literal sense. Currently, the United States imports over 25 percent of its oil requirement from the Gulf, Western Europe 66 percent, and Japan 75 percent. The Gulf producers fully concur with the assessment of Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, in a major address in March 1980, that "Soviet control of this area would make virtual economic vassals of much of both the industrialized and less-developed world."[7] Hence, they are confident that the United States will bring its full military power, including strategic options, to bear, if necessary, to forestall Soviet control. Their principal shield, they believe, is the American nuclear deterrent. This shield was in place long before President Carter pronounced his doctrine and derives not from any specific commitments made to them but from sheer American self-interest. It will remain operative regardless of the extent to which a permanent U.S. presence materializes locally or the degree of cooperation in regional defense that may be elicited from them.

This confidence is not misplaced. Escalation to the nuclear level in defense of the Gulf if conventional means fail will, given the stakes, be inevitable. As Brown indicated in that same speech, in reference to the possible recourse to theater nuclear weapons against a Soviet thrust through Iran, "any direct conflict between American and Soviet forces carries the risk of intensification and geographical spread of the conflict. We cannot concede to the Soviets full choice of the arena or the actions." Improvements in conventional strength can make nuclear use "less likely," but cannot rule it out.[8]

The extent to which a determined Soviet military threat can be stemmed by any size conventional force the United States can realistically field is highly questionable. Geography, distances, and sheer numbers here strongly favor the adversary. Besides, the time dimension is important in an additional sense. A credible U.S. capacity to project at short notice a force of one hundred thousand troops equipped and ready for high-intensity combat in the Middle East—as projected in the Rapid Deployment Force plans—will not be available until the latter part of the decade. Yet, the next ten years are expected to be precisely the period of highest Western dependence on Middle Eastern oil, and maximum economic vulnerability in the event of a cutoff.

The likelihood of conventional war between the Soviet Union and the West in the Gulf region is further diminished by the very asymmetry of the costs to both sides should the flow of oil be disrupted because of large-scale warfare there. Obviously, most, if not all, the burden would fall on the industrial West (and on the oil producers, naturally). The significant threat is not simply of Soviet seizure and control of the oil sources. In fact, Moscow might find sufficient reward for a local military adventure in the crippling blow dealt the economies of the West by the extended denial of Gulf petroleum through destruction of terminal loading facilities, pumping stations, pipelines and other such extremely vulnerable and fragile structures, mining of navigational lanes, sinking of tankers at choke points, and so on. Such huge strategic advantages would accrue to the Soviet Union that the Soviets, having decided to wage a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

campaign for the oil fields, might so plan their postulated offensive that maximum damage can be wreaked on oil production and transportation facilities, were they to fail in seizing these objectives. For the West, the mere fact of warfare in the oil-producing areas would be catastrophic, quite apart from the eventual outcome of the conflict.

Formal doctrine and official rhetoric aside, the logic of the situation suggests that, in all likelihood, the deployment of U.S. troops in the Gulf in the 1980s will fundamentally serve the nuclear-triggering "trip wire" function that American forces have fulfilled for several decades in the NATO theater.

In an era characterized by increasing diffusion of military power and economic intervulnerability, the protection of American interests in the Middle East of the 1980s will require, more than ever, an environment of amicable and mutually cooperative relations between this country and states in the area. As in the past, the major impediment to friendly relations between the United States and Arab countries, and the principal source of regional instability, is the unresolved Arab-Israeli issue. Pending a solution to remaining issues, principally the Palestinian dimension, there will be extremely limited scope for joint efforts with most Arab states in collective security against Soviet regional inroads. A comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement, obtainable only through vigorous U.S. diplomacy, would deprive the Soviets of their principal vehicle for political influence within the Arab core, and create a climate conducive to stable security relationships. Moreover, the integration of the strongest and most effective Middle Eastern military power—Israel—into such security arrangements would, for the first time, become politically feasible. Finally, in the Gulf, an obtrusively large U.S. military presence may increase the risks to friendly regimes of domestic and intraregional challenges from nationalist forces opposed to close association with external power blocs. For purposes of Soviet deterrence, it would be superfluous.

REFERENCES

[1]For full text, see U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947*, vol. 5: *The Near East and Africa* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 575.

[2]U.S. Department of State, *Bulletin*, March 20, 1950.

[3]Richard P. Stebbings et al., *The United States in World Affairs, 1950* (New York: Harper, 1951), p. 307.

[4]U.S. Department of State, *United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956-June 1957*, Publication no. 6505, 1960.

[5]For a good compendium of representative views, see *The Soviet Union and the Middle East: The Post-World War II Era*, Ivo. J. Lederer and Wayne S. Vucinich (eds.) (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1974).

[6]David D. Newsom, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, in an address, "U.S. Policy toward the Persian Gulf," Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., April 11, 1980.

[7]*New York Times*, March 7, 1980.

[8]Ibid.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HENRY ROWEN

American Security Interests in Northeast Asia

AMERICAN SECURITY INTERESTS IN NORTHEAST ASIA can be divided into two categories: the direct interests we have in the countries in the region—Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and China—and those that derive from wider concerns, especially our relations with the Soviet Union. Both categories have been important, but the latter has grown in significance over time.

Our Direct Interests

Japan, a nation whose economic output is about tied for second in the world with that of the Soviet Union, is at the center of our Asian interests. It is America's largest trading partner. It has a flourishing free enterprise system and a healthy democracy, attributes that we value highly in a world much of which is under the rule of authoritarian and totalitarian governments. Although objections are voiced frequently about Japan's economic policies, its alleged failure to carry its share of defense, or its propensity to be neutralist in its foreign policies, there should be no doubt that Japan has made a large contribution to American and world welfare in the past thirty-five years through its vigorous industrial enterprise and its exemplary political model.

These characteristics of the Japanese system contribute to our welfare broadly defined. But what about our security interests defined more narrowly? Three decades ago a highly important American objective was to assure that Japan did not again become a threat, an objective that has been attained. This was rapidly succeeded by a recognition that an unarmed—later, a relatively poorly armed—Japan needed protection. The result was the Mutual Security Treaty, which, in reality, is asymmetrical: the United States has an obligation to come to Japan's defense but not vice versa. Starting from an unarmed position, Japan's defense contribution in this relationship has been growing steadily. Although Japan devotes a much smaller share of its output to defense than does the United States, its military capability—and therefore its self-defense capability—has been growing at about the growth rate of the Japanese economy—which, of course, has been one of the highest in the world. Moreover, American use of Japanese bases contributes importantly to the security of Korea.

That a secure and politically and financially stable Japan is strongly in our interest can hardly be doubted. Although the present situation with respect to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

direct threats to Japan is not alarming—to either Japanese or Americans—the future looks a good deal shakier. And there are even more serious questions about the role of Japan in the context of larger American security problems and interests.

Our direct interests in Korea are much more modest than in Japan, a fact that reflects its smaller size, its less developed state, and the authoritarian nature of its politics. It was unfortunate, but understandable, that Dean Acheson omitted mention of Korea in his famous speech in 1950 in which he described American interests in East Asia and the Western Pacific. Much has changed in the thirty years since. Korea has made remarkable economic progress, and it has also developed politically, despite contrary evidence in the turbulence since the assassination of President Park. Economic progress, the growth of an entrepreneurial class, and a heightened political awareness are developing a more pluralistic structure of politics, one that augers well for the future. But it also must be said that the recent events create uncertainty about the future of Korean politics.

By the 1990s Korea stands a good chance of becoming a highly developed industrial state, perhaps with a pluralist political system. Moreover, should it become unified under a democratic capitalist system—by some now unforeseeable means—Korea would become a major economic actor on the world scene.

Although this analysis does not deal centrally with China and Taiwan, these countries cannot be omitted from any analysis of our interests in the region. Our direct interest in Taiwan is, of course, substantial, despite the cutting of formal ties with that country and our recognition of the regime in Beijing. There is a flourishing economic relationship between Taiwan and the United States, and there is a security relationship. The commitment to the defense of the people of Taiwan that the United States adopted in 1950 effectively remains (although it is in a peculiar juridical status in view of our nonrecognition of the government of the country we are protecting), and it enjoys wide support with the American public.

Our direct interest in China is much more tentative and prospective than tangible and actual. One billion people, one fourth of the world population, would seem to require a strong interest on our part, and the talents of the Chinese are impressive. Perhaps in the twenty-first century China will become a great economic power; the Chinese display high productivity where they are given opportunities as in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Yet, despite a fascination with the exotic character of China, modern and ancient, and a certain romantic recollection of earlier Sino-American associations, China has been a world apart, and a seemingly bizarre one insofar as we have had glimpses of it, for a generation. Our interests in China, potentially large, are for the near future likely to be largely indirect, that is to say, strategic.

Indirect, Strategic Interests

In addition to these direct interests there are important interactions within the region and between it and the rest of the world. Within the region, narrowly defined, Sino-Japanese relations, tensions between the two Koreas, the Repub-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lic of Korea-Japanese relation, and the interactions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with China and with the Soviet Union are especially important.

Japan has long tried to maintain a stance of neutrality, one equidistant between Beijing and Moscow. Increasingly, this stance has had a tilt toward the former, especially in the last three years, as China has moderated its hostility to the West. The principal Japanese interest has been in greater trade with China and investment opportunities. These activities alone are sufficient to bring the two nations together, but combined with Japanese concerns about growing Soviet power and its propensity to act coercively—for instance, in its activities in the northern islands—the Japanese are inclined to lean more strongly toward China.

Despite occasional declarations of a willingness to negotiate differences between Pyongyang and Seoul, relations between the two Koreas remain nearly nonexistent, nor is there much evidence that this situation will change in the near future.

The importance of the Japanese-Korean relation derives from the vulnerability of Korea to attack; the importance to Japan of the nature of the regime controlling Korea; and the still developing nature of the Korean economy, together with the great strength of the Japanese economy. Despite the fact that economic relations are well developed between Tokyo and Seoul and there is some improvement in political relations, there remain substantial cultural and political barriers to collective activities relating to defense that stem from the historical animosities between these two nations. Japan's potential for support of Korea is very great, but so far it remains latent.

The DPRK, although militarily strong relative to the South, is isolated and poor. Its economic prospects compared with the South are gloomy; it depends on support from the Soviet Union and China, although neither power has been especially generous in aid. The animosity between the two larger powers must create substantial problems for Kim Il-sung and his associates, but it also gives him some leverage. Beijing has strong incentives to keep North Korea from doing anything rash, but Moscow may have different incentives. Unfortunately, Pyongyang is even more of a "black box" for political prognosticators than Moscow and Beijing, and there is a good deal of uncertainty about the nature of the regime that will succeed that of Kim Il-sung, perhaps soon.

Role of the United States-Soviet Union Competition

A broader set of interactions center on our global competition with the Soviet Union, a competition in which we are not doing well. The Soviet Union has over the last decade reversed the balance on most indicators of military nuclear power, has increased its preponderence of power on the ground in Europe, and is rapidly acquiring—and exercising—the capacity to project military force well beyond its borders. Increasingly pressed on all fronts, most recently and seriously in the Persian Gulf region, and so far being unwilling to expand our military establishment to a degree necessary to offset the growth of Soviet power (which, it should be remembered, is a much poorer society), our leaders have been increasingly inclined to search for other assets to throw into the bal-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ance. This process has found its most striking example in our moves toward China in the past decade (and vice versa); these, in effect, are steps toward the development of an anti-Soviet coalition. Ironically, given Soviet expressed concerns about foreign adversaries, this anti-Soviet coalition-forming process is being directly driven by its own activities.

Sometimes observers assume that such a coalition already exists. This is the implicit position of those who hold that the United States need not increase its military effort, who point to the enormous aggregate gross national products of all of the nations who have an adversary relation with the Soviet Union, or point to their less impressive defense expenditures—which are nonetheless very substantial—and argue that the Warsaw Pact is outclassed. However, such comparisons assume, wrongly, that there would be cooperation among this disparate set of governments, or that the Soviets would themselves assume such cooperation. Whatever the solidarity of the Warsaw Pact, there is much less basis for assuming collective action among these noncommunist (plus China) countries. This is obviously true of Japan, which has sought to maintain a low international profile, equidistance between the Soviet Union and China, and a narrowly defense-oriented military posture. Disparate objectives, at the least, have also been visible over the years among members of NATO. And China will undoubtedly turn out to be headed in directions not entirely congenial to us.

Nonetheless, the behavior of the Soviet Union is pushing others toward greater cooperation. Some European countries, with approval by the United States, are now providing arms to China; American and Japanese economic relations with China are progressing, although unsteadily; among other things, they are resulting in the transfer of noncombat military items. In Korea, Japanese economic aid as well as investment have done a good deal to help strengthen that economy and, therefore, its defense potential.

Japan has far and away the greatest military potential in the region, but it has continued to define its defense interests narrowly. There is, so far, no commitment for the defense of Korea, no substantial widening of responsibility for coping with growing Soviet naval power in the Pacific, and, most obviously, no undertaking to be part of a wider collective security system to cope with extensions of Soviet power. And Japanese forces continue to have low combat capability. Nonetheless, attitudes are shifting in a way to make such developments more probable in the future, and events are cumulating to provide stronger incentives to move Japan in this direction.

Japanese-American Security Relations

There has always been a certain distance in the Japanese-American relation, greater than in most of our European ones. The reasons are familiar: our European cultural heritage, the language barrier, and the historical isolation and cohesiveness of the Japanese people as well as their determination in the post-World War II world not to become engaged in political undertakings that carry risks. Cultural and political insensitivities have been a fertile source of trouble, as in the famous "shocks" that American administrations inflict on their Japanese counterparts, and in Japanese moves that display a single-minded profit-maximizing attitude that benefits foreign consumers but sometimes hurts foreign producers. One can, however, also view the glass as half full. Despite

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

barriers to understanding, the Japanese-American relationship has not only survived, it can be said to have flourished. Somehow, the interests that join us have managed to prevail over those that divide, although the strength of the latter should not be underestimated.

Vigorous and growing economic relations with another country and common political principles do not necessarily generate a strong case for security relations—as Japan's relations with the rest of the world's democracies illustrate. Specifically, why at this stage in history should the United States be the guarantor of Japan's security in a relationship that is asymmetric? This is an especially pertinent question to ask now that our economy is in disarray and many demands are being placed on our military establishment to commit more resources to the Middle East. Part of the answer has been mentioned: the high importance we attach to Japan and to good relations with it. Another part of the answer is that our commitment to defend Japan does not cost us much. That is, assuming that we want to have a strong military position in the Western Pacific for reasons that have to do with other regional interests (e.g., Korea and Taiwan) and global interests (China and the Soviet Union), the incremental costs to us of contributing usefully to Japan's security have been modest. But it is becoming increasingly clear that the pressures on us in various parts of the globe make it now more urgent for Japan to be doing more on defense.

Therefore, once again American officials are urging that Japan expand its defense budget, again pointing to the small share of its gross national product devoted to defense. In the past, at least, American officials who have urged such increases have usually been less than specific about threats to Japan that may emerge and about concrete tasks that should be carried out by Japanese, not American, forces. In the past, clear and present dangers to their security have, on the whole, not been discerned by the Japanese nor—when it came to specifics—identified by their American counterparts. Nor have the Americans been able to use the argument of a reciprocal security relationship. (Political realism suggests that *some* reciprocity must be perceived, or the relationship would not have persisted for as long as it has.)

Nonetheless, despite the fact that many Japanese observe clearly the shifts in the power balances, and despite the attention given in Japan to the buildup of Soviet forces in East Asia and the Western Pacific and the excitement generated over the Soviet reinforcements in the four northern islands, these developments have been seen largely as changes that do not warrant a major shift in policy—at least not yet. However, the underlying political conditions for a major change are being created. For many years a substantial minority of those polled opposed the self-defense forces and the security relationship with the United States. During the 1970s there was a marked decline in opposition to both, especially the former. Japanese governments now have a freer hand on security matters; joint planning and training with the United States and the forces of other nations are now politically feasible. But Japan's basic international strategy remains: to keep a low profile politically; concentrate its energies on economic progress; maintain a small, technically modern, and growing military establishment; and continue its close ties with the United States.

In short, the Japanese have not felt seriously threatened by any adversary. Such security concerns that have existed were regarded as an American responsibility to handle. The self-defense forces are regarded largely as a cadre, yet an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

increasingly substantial one; weak in current operational capability, but capable of being expanded to a much more powerful force in a few years if Japan's security environment should take a turn for the worse.

Regional and Wider Contingencies

Although the East Asian scene (with the principal exception of mainland Southeast Asia) is not a probable scene of war, there are several arenas of possible conflict.

One possibility is the resumption of war on the Korean peninsula. Such a war, if confined to the peninsula, and if U.S. forces are available in substantial numbers to bolster those of the ROK, would not hurt Japan. (Indeed, the 1950-53 War provided a boost to the convalescing Japanese economy.) But conflict is most unlikely to occur under such conditions, although there remain the possibilities that Kim Il-sung might act in desperation or that Soviet interest might be served, and succeed, in stirring up such a conflict. However, such a war, for reasons discussed below, would raise the possibility of Japanese involvement much more sharply than in the past. On balance, South Korean strength, the U.S.-ROK defense treaty, and the American military presence in South Korea continue to make this contingency an unlikely one. (The high importance attached to the American presence on the ground as a deterrent made President Carter's effort to remove ground forces frightening, not only to the Koreans, but also to the Japanese, who nevertheless found it politically difficult to oppose his withdrawal decision.)

A second possibility is direct Sino-Soviet conflict. Even if Japan succeeded in remaining neutral, it would face a much less constrained Soviet Union should the outcome be a greatly weakened China. Correctly or not, such a conflict—on a major scale—is judged by the experts to be improbable.

A third possibility often discussed under the heading of potential threats to Japan is Soviet interdiction of Japan's sea lines of communications. Japan's high dependence on sea transport and the growing naval and air power of the Soviet Union provides some basis for concern. On balance, this threat has never seemed to the Japanese to be a serious one. Such a campaign would pit the Soviet Union against all the seafaring nations of the world, including the United States, and the Soviet naval and air position in the Western Pacific has substantial vulnerabilities.

A fourth contingency is a wider war in Southeast Asia. Vietnam might make a major move against Thailand; China, possibly in response to, or in anticipation of, such a move, might attack Vietnam, perhaps on a larger scale than before; the Soviet Union would provide at least arms to Vietnam and perhaps take more direct action; the United States could be drawn in to defend Thailand if it was gravely threatened. How might such a scenario affect Northeast Asia? China is a probable actor, and its involvement, perhaps together with the Soviet Union, carries a risk of a wider war. Japan's large trade with the Southeast Asian countries would be hurt. A further possible consequence would be the establishment of a major Soviet military position in Vietnam. (This may be in the process of happening anyway.) Such a development would affect the American position in the Western Pacific and the route to the Indian

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ocean, as well as the extensive Japanese economic interests in the area and its sea-lanes of communication; and the Chinese would find their adversary well established to the south as well as to the north. It would also affect Australia and other countries in the region. Among other things, such a set of developments would probably push the ASEAN countries toward forming a collective security system and toward seeking closer ties to the United States and Australia. A more conjectural possibility is a Japanese security association with a security-oriented ASEAN.

Japan's Energy Vulnerability

A new and very troublesome threat has now arisen, the possibility that the oil of the Persian Gulf will come under the influence—or direct control—of the Soviet Union. This is not the only threat to the continued supply of that oil; the deliberate supply interruption by the Arab producers in 1973-74 and the chaos that reduced Iran's output in 1979 illustrate two other interruption mechanisms. But the most dangerous by far is the possibility of heightened Soviet Union influence, either through the coming to power of regimes in the region that look to that country for support and that would depend on it for their survival, or through a direct Soviet move into the Gulf region. Its military dominance today in the region is evident and is becoming more widely recognized. The distance from the trans-Caucasus military district of the Soviet Union to the northern end of the Gulf is only five hundred miles; it is only about one thousand miles from the main Soviet bases from which many airborne units might be sent. For the United States, the comparable distance is seven thousand miles for our principal forces. Given this disparity in distance, the Soviets can deploy forces to the Gulf by air and over land much more rapidly than we can, and can build up clearly dominant forces certainly for the first several weeks after they start and perhaps for much longer.

Japan is the most dependent of the large industrial countries on imported energy. In 1977 imports of all forms of energy accounted for 88 percent of Japan's total energy supply; oil made up 75 percent of all energy, and about 75 percent of all oil came from the Persian Gulf. In short, oil from the Gulf makes up about 50 percent of Japan's primary energy; by comparison, it amounts to about 10 percent of total U.S. primary energy. Moreover, oil plays a much larger role in Japan's industrial sector than it does in the United States; 60 percent of the energy consumed by industry is in the form of oil in Japan, whereas in this country it is about 25 percent. The proportion of oil used in transportation in the two countries is approximately reversed.

The efficiency of energy use in Japan is quite high. Expressed in terms of energy usage per unit of economic output, Japan is about 40 percent more efficient than the United States. And it has managed to increase its economic output substantially since the sharp oil price increase in 1973, with a very low ratio of increased energy use, including oil, to increased economic output.

The effect of interruptions of oil supply on the Japanese economy can be expected to be greater than to other economies, certainly that of the United States. For us, a reduction of, say, 35 percent of our total oil availability for a year would produce an enormous GNP loss, at least 20 percent (assuming no

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

damage-limiting measures such as a strategic petroleum reserve); for Japan, a comparable percentage reduction in oil supply would produce an even greater percentage loss in economic output.

Other nations are, of course, highly dependent on Persian Gulf oil. Western Europe receives about 50 percent of its oil from this source and the United States about 25 percent. The best single measure of vulnerability is that about 40 percent of the oil of the noncommunist countries comes from the Gulf.

An important question that faces any country highly dependent on Persian Gulf oil is whether in a crisis the market would be allowed to work, assisted by the International Energy Agency formula for the sharing of remaining oil in the event of a major interruption. The market and the IEA mechanisms would tend to equalize the shortages of oil among consuming countries. This would still result in great economic damage if there was a major interruption, but it would be very much less difficult to cope with—in part through the mechanism of a strategic petroleum reserve—the threat of a 20 or even a 40 percent reduction in oil availability than to have to absorb up to a 75 percent cut. And there is evidence in support of Japanese concerns that oil shortages might not be evened out around the world in a crisis. For instance, Congress prohibits Alaskan oil from being shipped abroad. This rules out a natural market for it today, and an even more important destination for it in a Persian Gulf crisis—Japan—unless the law is changed. In all likelihood, anticipation in the United States of the catastrophic economic and political consequences of the collapse of the economy of any major Western industrial nation, certainly that of Japan, would result in the sharing of remaining oil supplies. But it is easy to see why the Japanese are nervous.

Although certain preparatory actions, such as the stockpiling of oil—which the Japanese have been energetically doing and we have not—can help limit the damage, Japan and the West will continue to have a vulnerable dependency on Persian Gulf oil for many years to come. Given current policies, it might decline by a few percent in the aggregate by 1990. This high dependency, combined with the superior power projection capacity of the Soviet Union into the Persian Gulf region, implies that the potential for Soviet control, or at least influence, over the terms on which Persian Gulf oil will be made available to importers may continue for years ahead. That is, this potential will continue until an adequate defense of this oil is put in place. Today, such military moves as have been taken by the West to deter Soviet moves in the Persian Gulf, which are not adequate, have been made by the United States. On the other hand, the United States is one of the major least-dependent countries on direct oil flows from this region. We have acted to send forces to the Indian Ocean because this oil is both an essential and a common resource; that is, the oil market is a worldwide one.

Nonetheless, it will probably prove to be impossible over the long run for the United States to make costly commitments to the defense of Persian Gulf oil without participation in some form by European and Japanese allies. The French at least have a substantial naval presence in the Indian Ocean and troops in Djibouti; the British, an occasional and more modest one, together with an advisor presence in Oman. The politics of this situation will require that more be done, both substantially and symbolically, in the region by them and by the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Japanese. This requirement poses an especially difficult problem for the latter, for whom the option of sending military forces to the Indian Ocean has been, and still is, beyond the bounds of political feasibility. But politically less difficult actions can be undertaken by the Japanese. As observed earlier, U.S. forces have had to be moved from both the Pacific and the Mediterranean, probably permanently. This means that we can be less confident of being able to reinforce Europe or Northeast Asia in crises that may erupt in either of these regions. This, in turn, implies that Japan will have to do more to fill the vacuum left by the United States. As for direct aid in the Middle East, a substantial financial contribution by Japan to Turkey and Egypt, and perhaps some other nations, could be important contributions to an overall strategy for the region.

The Direct Threats to Japan

Although there has been a tacit American and Japanese agreement on the low probability of a direct attack on Japan, this judgment does not reflect an unchanging order of things, but rather an assessment of Soviet aims and capabilities over a particular period of time. Its capabilities are changing, and the aims could.

The Soviet stance toward Japan is notable for its rigidity and its aggressiveness. This has been expressed in air and naval patrols and exercises around Japan and, most strikingly, in its military activities in the northern islands claimed by Japan. These activities have seemed to many Western observers to be counterproductive for the Soviets. They have helped block potential Japanese investments in Siberia, and they have encouraged those in Japan who want to see Japan move closer to China or the United States, or both. But the buildup of Soviet forces and its activities in the area are not seriously disturbing to the extent that the U.S. security tie can be relied on. Unhappily, the 1970s have seen the possibility of American isolation from Japan as becoming more likely than before. The Guam Doctrine, which signaled a major retrenchment in Asia; the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam, followed by the collapse in Saigon; our failure to respond to Soviet moves in Angola and elsewhere in Africa; the visible changes in the nuclear balance; President Carter's effort to remove American ground forces from Korea; and the reductions in our forces in the Pacific—all have had a cumulative effect on Japanese attitudes, if not yet policy.

Japan is most obviously exposed to nuclear attack. Should the Soviet Union threaten nuclear attack on Japanese forces or cities, there is, today, no effective direct defense nor a Japanese capacity for retaliation. Such a move is seen to be discouraged principally by the prospect of an American nuclear response. Although nuclear coercion—still less, attack—is highly improbable in the near future, it might not be so in the more distant future if the relative power of the United States vis-à-vis the Soviet Union continues to decline. Some Japanese analysts assert that the Soviet Union might, at some point, judge that direct nuclear threats to Japan are not very risky, especially if its aims were limited, for example, to forcing Japan to alter its policies toward China.

It appears today that only the prospect of being isolated could induce Japan to acquire nuclear weapons, an unlikely possibility during the course of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1980s—although not altogether excluded. But such an undertaking would not only face a good deal of domestic resistance, it would pose demanding technical and budgetary challenges. Certainly, Japan has impressive technical and economic resources, more so than Britain and France, the two second-level nuclear weapons powers. But the British and French nuclear forces have served largely symbolic functions. In this era the Japanese taste for symbols does not give a high place to military ones, still less military nuclear ones. The circumstances in which Japan might decide that a nuclear force is important for it to have—if they happen at all—are likely to make such an enterprise a serious one, but the creation of a major nuclear force would be a formidable and costly job.

A second direct threat that has long been the principal concern of the Japanese army is a direct amphibious and air attack on Hokkaido. Soviet ground and air forces in Siberia have been expanded greatly since the late 1960s and are impressively large, but these are largely strung along the border with China. And although Soviet naval power in the area continues to grow, its amphibious capability is too small to pose a major invasion threat to Japan. (If more amphibious lift were to be moved from the other Soviet fleets, such a move would be visible and would enable Japan to strengthen its defenses—and the United States to send reinforcements.) Still, if Japan were to be without backing from the United States and no better armed than it is today, the Japanese forces might be overcome. For instance, Japanese air units are highly concentrated and vulnerable, and they are reported as having very low stocks of munitions and other war consumables. They have been counting on the United States not only to deter an attack, but, evidently, to provide supplies in a war emergency also.

Although the likelihood that the United States will sever its security ties with Japan is very remote, a more pressing problem is that we could be less able to reinforce Japan, or Korea, in a conflict than in the past. We face a double squeeze: on the one hand, our forces have shrunk, while, on the other, the demands have grown, most obviously in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf area. If trouble breaks out in either the Persian Gulf or Europe at the same time as in Northeast Asia, we would have to decide which theater to concentrate on. The choice between emphasizing the Gulf versus, say, Korea could be an especially painful one from a Japanese perspective (and that of other East Asians), because in both cases we would be defending Japanese and other Asian interests—in the former case by helping to defend their oil and in the latter by helping to ward off an attack close to home. In such a circumstance, Japan could find that the role of its military could be important and, perhaps, decisive. If we are largely preoccupied elsewhere, Japanese ground forces might make a crucial difference in the defense in South Korea, or Japanese naval forces could help to prevent Soviet naval forces from passing through the narrow straits to the Pacific.

The counterarguments that Japan would be very unlikely to tackle the Soviet Union directly unless Japan had been directly attacked, and that political relations between these two countries rule out a substantial Japanese involvement in defense of Korea, may be correct. If so, and if simultaneous contingencies arise, the effect of Japanese noninvolvement could be a major setback, not only for others, but also for Japan. It remains to be seen if contemplation of these alternatives and possible consequences helps to produce a marked shift in Japanese policies in the next few years.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Japanese Defense Strategy and Programs

Japan's basic strategy has been to create a strong military technology base and a production capacity that could be expanded rapidly if its security environment worsens, not to maintain a large or combat-ready establishment. This strategy, of course, is consistent with the judgment that the current risks are low, but that the more distant future is uncertain.[1] It was supported with a budget in 1979 of around $9.5 billion (at the then prevailing exchange rate), about 0.9 percent of Japan's GNP. (On the NATO defense definition, it is about 1.5 percent.) This budget supports a force with the following composition:

Ground Self-Defense Force:	12 divisions 1 composite brigade 180,000 men
Maritime Self-Defense Force:	59 ships 14 submarines About 190 aircraft
Air Self-Defense Force:	About 400 aircraft

The proportionally large effort devoted to the Army reflects both the strongly defensive nature of Japanese strategy and the traditional importance of the Army in the Japanese political-bureaucratic system. American military and civilian officials have often urged that Japan concentrate proportionately more effort on naval and air activities in view of the growing strength of the Soviet Union in these categories, but such a reallocation has not occurred.

The operational tasks of these forces are surveillance, dealing with seaborne and land invasion, guarding traffic in the waters around Japan, and air defense. They have been construed very narrowly; for instance, when Japan decided to acquire the F4 fighter, it took pains to build versions that were without the bomb racks on the original American version. However, when Japan decided, more recently, to buy the F15 fighter, no such modification to remove attack capabilities was made.

Two questions come to mind in considering the role of these forces in the context of an uncertain future. How effective might Japanese forces be? And how rapidly might Japanese military power be expanded if a decision was made to expand it greatly?

On the first question, assuming shortages in war consumables were made up, possibly by emergency shipments from the United States, Japanese forces could play a key role in helping to block or at least impede Soviet naval and air access to the Pacific—and beyond to the Indian Ocean. Even the Soviet estimate that Japan might do this could have a chilling effect on some possible Soviet initiatives. Another possibility, suggested above, is the use of some of Japan's twelve divisions in Korea in the event of an attack by the North. The nearest outside reinforcing unit for Korea is the U.S. marine division on Okinawa, but this division is also the nearest available to the Persian Gulf. It might be unavailable in a Korean contingency, in which case Japanese ground self-defense force units might have to substitute for it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As to the buildup potential of the Japanese forces, the Japanese weapon procurement strategy has been predominately to build weapons at home (often using foreign technology), even though the procurement quantities are often so small as to make the costs much higher than procurement abroad. This policy provides the Japanese with production capacity that could be expanded rapidly if needed, and it reduces Japan's dependence on foreign weapon suppliers. Perhaps within two years of a decision to do so, a substantial increase in weapons production and in the size of Japan's forces would be feasible. Perhaps within three to five years, if resources were devoted to it, Japan's military establishment could become the third most powerful in the world, after those of the Soviet Union and the United States.

The basis for such an estimate is Japan's large GNP, now around $1,000 billion. If Japan were to devote the same share of GNP to defense as the United States, its current expenditure rate would be around $45 billion; such a rate could support a military establishment several times the size of the present one. And in a sufficiently serious national emergency, Japan might devote a larger proportion than this to defense. By way of comparison, at the peak of the Korean War, the United States allocated about 14 percent of its GNP to defense; for Japan today, this would mean a defense budget of about $150 billion.

The Japanese, of course, have no intention of doing anything of the sort. Indeed, in fiscal 1980 the share of GNP devoted to defense will apparently fall below the 0.9 percent allocated in fiscal 1979. But the capability to engage in such a large defense expansion exists, and in some circumstances might be exercised.

The Future of Japanese-American Relations

Asymmetries between Japan and the United States exist in more than security relations and defense spending. They exist also in economic performance, but here it is the Japanese who have taken the lead—and by a wide margin. Through disciplined endeavor they have brought their economy up to the level where per capita GNP is about equal to that of the United States. Their rate of economic growth, although reduced, at an expected five percent or more annually is about twice that of the estimated U.S. growth potential. They invest a higher proportion of resources in research and development. Because they invest about twice as much of the percentage of GNP as we do, a much higher rate of economic growth than in the United States can be expected through the 1980s.

The United States, on the other hand, through neglect and mismanagement, has allowed its economy to stagnate. Investment is low, the share of output devoted to research and development has fallen, productivity growth has nearly ceased. This decline is not inevitable; it is largely the product of bad public policies, but on current projections the U.S. economy will continue to stagnate. Because of this, we can expect to see Japanese firms continuing to move vigorously into Western markets, including the United States, with excellent products offered at attractive prices. This process will feed protectionist sentiments, which are already on the rise. Although the Japanese contribute to this backlash by their reluctance to open up the Japanese market fully, most of these problems are made in America. They can turn out to be no less serious for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that fact. And there can be a large spillover into political relations between the countries. Because our problems are predominately homegrown, we should work especially hard not to let our economic failings be the cause of poisoned relations with Japan.

A question that is likely to be increasingly asked in this country is this: What benefits does the United States get from providing one-way protection to a country that is doing little to protect itself when the citizens of that country are wealthier than ours? Acceptable answers so far have been that Japan's defense budget has been increasing rapidly in real terms (about at the same rate as its economic output); it cooperates in providing bases that help American interests throughout the Pacific and East Asia; the Japanese government, like the American one, is constrained by domestic political opinion that has opposed a larger defense effort; and the cost of the American commitment has been low.

It is not clear that these answers will be good enough in the future. Although it would arguably not be rational for the U.S. government to do so, it is conceivable that a future administration might feel so pressed by competing demands that it would have to insist that Japan adopt a symmetric security relationship with the United States, or the current asymmetric one would have to be ended. A more plausible future is that incremental change in the relationship will occur. Attitudes on defense are shifting in Japan, and if we work closely with them on defense, energy, and economic issues, together we should be able to strengthen the relationship and not allow it to deteriorate.

On balance, in view of the deterioration of the overall balance with the Soviet Union and our preoccupation with Middle East threats (in part in the defense of Japanese interests in oil security), it is important that Japan do more for its own security; it should now take primary responsibility for it, with the United States in a supporting role (and with a major U.S. responsibility for deterring nuclear attack). The assumption of such responsibility would have important implications for Japanese defense programs and expenditures. The politics of extending Japan's scope of defense responsibility aside, Japan would then be *capable* of contributing more directly than it has to the security of the rest of Northeast Asia. With the diversion of American forces to other threatened areas, there may be important additional military tasks for the Japanese to perform in this region. And we can use Japanese financial and political help in the Middle East as well.

The Balance in Korea

As of 1977 the United States estimated the ratio of Korean forces in the North versus the South as follows:[2]

	North:South
Ground Forces Manpower	0.9:1
Tanks	1.5:1
Artillery	1.9:1
Armored Personnel Carriers	1.9:1

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In addition, the superior strength of the North Korean air force over that of South Korea has long been recognized.

This disparity in force strength is not enormous and, in itself, perhaps would not generate serious concern for the stability of the balance on the peninsula. However, several factors, including a recent revelation, make the problem a serious one. One is the closeness of Seoul to the demilitarized zone. It lies only 26 miles away, and a sudden move by the North to take it is a clear threat. A second factor is the nature of the system in the North. The long-term prospects for the North in competition with the much more economically dynamic South are poor. The system is closed, and the regime, brutal. The North gives ample evidence of preparations for attack. These factors, together with its relations with both China and the Soviet Union might, it is feared by some analysts, cause it to launch an attack—possibly to try to force its allies to provide greater support, although China seems to have a large stake in trying to prevent such an adventure.

The revelation referred to was the public release last year of U.S. intelligence estimates of North Korean strength. Estimated ground forces have gone up from 440,000 to between 550,000 and 600,000 men, the number of divisions and brigades from twenty-nine to thirty-seven, the number of tanks by 35 percent, and artillery tubes and armored personnel carriers by 20 percent.[3] These increases, the eruption of political turmoil in South Korea, and widespread opposition in the Congress have caused President Carter's plan to remove U.S. ground forces from that country, in effect, to be abandoned.

Assuming that the necessary conditions for military stability on the peninsula will be satisfied, our primary concern should be doing what we can to end the political instability brought about by President Park's assassination. This requires getting the military out of politics as quickly as possible and establishing the legitimacy of civilian rule and political succession. Strong American support for Korean security is a necessary condition for these developments to occur.

South Korea has a bright future if these current troubles can be overcome. It has had one of the most rapidly growing economies in the world in the past decade; in terms of 1976 dollars, Korea's GNP per capita increased fourfold between 1961 and 1977. Although growth has slowed recently, the Korean economy remains perhaps the most dynamic in the world. Moreover, if there is political stability, this process can be expected to continue, although at a slower rate of growth than before, because of the general slowdown in world economic growth expected in the 1980s. By the year 2000 Korean per capita income could approach that of Japan today. It is very much to our interests and to those of the Japanese to help this process along.

The Chinese Puzzle

The most important issue that we face in our relations with China is how rapidly to move ahead on security relations with that country. The pace of our economic relations will be determined largely by the ability of the Chinese to free themselves from the inefficient bureaucratic system they have saddled themselves with. At best, given the entrenched nature of this system and the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

poverty of the Chinese people, it will probably take over a decade for trade between China and the industrial world to become a major factor in the world economy. This assumes a continuation of present trends in Beijing, but high volatility in its politics may not have come to an end. There may be some unpleasant surprises ahead for those who have welcomed its modest moves toward liberalization and its opening up to the rest of the world.

A dominant factor in how far and how fast relations with China will develop, as Richard Solomon points out, is the behavior of the Soviet Union.[4] In effect, the Soviets are acting in ways that provide an incentive for the formation of a coalition opposed to it among China, Japan, and the United States. This is, so far, a very limited and tacit one, but it is moving toward greater explicitness.

Caution in proceeding to develop closer security ties with China derives from the view that its political stability and future orientation are far from certain, and the Soviet response to closer relations between China and the United States and possibly between Japan and China may be strong and damaging. As to the first argument, it is possible that China will again change course, and it is certainly capable of causing a great deal of trouble to its neighbors. (Its extensive territorial claims in the South China Sea provide an example of one possible trouble spot.) And an economically stronger China would be a greater potential threat. Still, a judgment must be made about the probabilities of China pursuing various future courses. In any case, economic competition among the noncommunist nations for economic exchanges with China essentially excludes a unified policy toward China (with the exception of transfers of some types of military technology). Also, the fungibility of resources, and specifically the overlap between many nonmilitary and military technologies, undermines this first argument if one assumes that economic relations will continue to develop.

The argument on the Soviet response seems to assume that the Soviet Union is not already embarked on a serious campaign to extend its power abroad, and that being confronted with a stronger opposition will cause it not to moderate its behavior but to act more aggressively. Both are dubious propositions. Although the Soviet power projection strategy is short of an all-out one, it is nonetheless a very substantial one that today claims a large proportion of its resources. Its success and momentum clearly compel us to adopt a more effective response than we have. Some who oppose our increasing security ties with China also argue in other contexts that the Soviet Union is highly risk-averse and that the Soviets are easily deterred from making military moves. Perhaps they view the Soviet attitude toward China as an exception to this general rule.

Under the heading of a violent Soviet response, one possibility is a preemptive attack on China, possibly with the aim of discrediting the Beijing regime, helping to bring about a change favorable to Moscow there, disrupting the Chinese economy, and perhaps detaching one or more Chinese provinces. Despite China's military weakness, such an enterprise would be costly, would carry substantial risks for the Soviets, and its long-run success seems doubtful.

If the United States and its principal allies continue to fail to develop a viable strategy for coping with the Soviet Union, they are likely to find themselves drawn increasingly to regard China as a key factor in deterring Soviet moves and increasingly to help with the modernization of its armed forces. While on balance this may turn out to be the least bad of the alternatives we then face,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this strategy should not be regarded as one in which we can place high confidence; it is no substitute for greater military capability and cohesion within the Western alliance system.

References

[1]This strategy is reminiscent of the famous British planning assumption, adopted in the 1920s, that there would be no war for the next ten years, an assumption moved ahead each year. Unfortunately, the British government continued making this assumption into the early 1930s. The Japanese, wisely, have not pretended to see that far ahead.

[2]Letter from Congressman Les Aspin to President Carter, June 6, 1979.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Richard H. Solomon (ed.), *Asian Security in the 1980s: Problems and Policies for a Time of Transition*, R-2492-ISA (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, November 1979).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ALLEN S. WHITING

China and the Superpowers: Toward the Year 2000

CHINA'S POST-MAO LEADERSHIP has targeted the year 2000 for catching up with the advanced nations of the world. Specifically, "four modernizations" constitute the agenda for action in agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defense. While the military target is last on the list and so far has the least amount of foreign technology contracted for, there is no question that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) will eventually develop a modern fighting capability.

The Carter Administration, following presidents Nixon and Ford, has consistently maintained that a "strong and secure China" is in the interest of the United States. In August 1979 Vice-President Walter Mondale told his audience at Beijing National University, "The fundamental challenges we face are to build concrete political ties in the context of mutual security." He further declared, "Any nation which seeks to weaken or isolate you in world affairs assumes a stance counter to American interest. . . . Above all, both our political interests are served by your growing strength in all fields, for it helps to deter others who might seek to impose themselves on you."

Mondale's thinly veiled reference to the Soviet Union and his assertion that mutual security interests link China and the United States hinted at a tacit Sino-American alliance. What does this imply for relations between the United States and the Soviet Union? How does China's growing military might relate to Soviet calculations and perceptions? Does a nuclear China contribute to, or detract from, stability between the superpowers? What if Sino-Soviet relations should improve? What of China's neighbors with whom Beijing has disputed boundaries on land and sea? How is the future of Taiwan to be settled?

These and other problems call for long-range policy planning. The expedient exploitation of Sino-Soviet tensions has outlived its short-run advantages, considerable as they may have been ten years ago. The symbolic juggling of summitry, so successfully employed by President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger, is insufficient to cope with the substantive issues that underlie military technology transfer and the sale of modern armaments to China. Admittedly, the impediments to prognosis are severe. The leaderships in both Moscow and Beijing will change in personnel and perhaps in outlook over the coming decade. China's developmental prospects remain uncertain, given its past record of recurring and radical changes in economic course. Moreover, the obstacles to pol-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

icy planning are equally formidable. Not only must it cope with an unstable world, but the consistency and content of American domestic politics cannot be calculated with confidence years in advance. Yet, without a domestic consensus, long-range foreign policy can come under short-run challenge.

The hazards of forecasting do not deter the weather bureau, however, despite the daily risk of being wrong. With due acknowledgement of human fallibility and unpredictability, therefore, I will attempt to assess the implications of China's growing military power in the remaining years of the twentieth century. In particular, I will examine those aspects that are most germane for U.S. policy. My observations are necessarily speculative and partial, but they may contribute to a debate over how we should relate to the two major communist countries to minimize the risks of regional as well as global conflict.

The Nuclear Equation

Ever since the People's Republic of China conducted its first nuclear test on October 16, 1964, the world has wondered how it would use its newly found power. Mao Zedong's widely quoted aphorism "The atom bomb is a paper tiger" offered little reassurance. Even more disturbing was his frequently repeated observation, first uttered to Prime Minister Nehru in 1954, that China could lose half its population and still be the largest country in the world. Mao later spoke to a domestic audience of the time when prolonged warfare and natural disaster had reduced China's population not by half, but from fifty to ten million, only to have it fully recover over time. As final evidence of his seemingly naive and cavalier view of nuclear warfare, Mao's admonition to "dig tunnels deep" produced a labyrinth of underground passageways and chambers under China's main cities during the last years of his life, which foreign experts regard as of little use against an atomic attack.

Fortunately, Chinese military behavior shows a prudent awareness of the hazards in facing a nuclear enemy. In the Korean war, the PLA adopted the name "Chinese People's Volunteers," a transparent fiction that nonetheless signaled a desire to reduce the risk of open belligerency. In the Quemoy crisis of 1958, mainland artillery batteries held their fire when American ships first convoyed Chinese Nationalist supplies from Taiwan. Only after the Seventh Fleet halted at the three-mile line did long-range guns open up and sink the Taiwan transports. Similarly, when Sino-Soviet border incidents flared into bloody clashes during 1969, Beijing carefully controlled its actions to minimize the excuse for Soviet escalation.

Last, but not least, from 1965 to 1968 Chinese aircraft shot down American bombers over North Vietnam as well as China. Meanwhile, fifty thousand PLA troops repaired Vietnamese roads and railroads, built bridges, and constructed a huge military redoubt complete with a 5,000-foot runway northwest of Hanoi. Two to three Chinese antiaircraft divisions exchanged first fire and then casualties with American attackers. Yet, to avoid open provocation, Beijing did not reveal its role until ten years later, despite the loss of face as Moscow's assistance to Hanoi gained worldwide publicity.

Thus, while accepting the risk of nuclear retaliation from American and Soviet forces in order to meet self-defined needs of national interest, Mao and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his colleagues sought to reduce that risk by carefully controlled actions. His constantly reiterated warning to "strategically despise the enemy but tactically respect him" guided the PLA action throughout Mao's lifetime.

There is every reason to think this prudence will continue to apply even though Mao's sayings have faded from view since his death. China's relatively small nuclear arsenal presumably results from limitations in capital, technology, and human resources. It may, however, also reflect a deliberate policy of not giving nuclear weapons the highest priority, at least in terms of quantity. In his unpublished remarks delivered to private audiences between 1955 and 1967, Mao repeatedly denied the likelihood of such weapons being used in combat. He claimed that capitalists would not risk destruction of the material gains they hoped to win through war by such devastating means. Instead, he argued, nuclear weapons were only for intimidation and blackmail. China purportedly needed a minimal deterrent to cope with the possibility of a "madman" and to show that it could not be intimidated. But its basic defense lay in its vast land and large population.

Yet, Mao's disparagement of the atomic bomb did not prevent him from pursuing this capability. In 1957 he won Khrushchev's agreement to provide Soviet technical assistance, a step that helped to advance China's initial atomic test by perhaps a decade. The program suffered badly, however, when Khrushchev reneged on part of his promise in 1959, allegedly in response to Mao's unilateral launching of the Quemoy crisis. China's nuclear program continued nevertheless. By 1980 its arsenal included between fifty and seventy IRBMs, forty to fifty MRBMs, and approximately ninety Tu-16 medium bombers. Two 6,000-mile ICBM tests revealed a first generation liquid-fueled capability, although Beijing may hope to acquire solid-fuel missiles before going into regular production.

This is an impressive accomplishment when placed against China's extreme poverty and technological backwardness. An ambitious schedule of satellite launchings over the next several years will be accompanied by efforts to achieve a submarine-launched missile capability, rounding out the arsenal of air-, ground-, and sea-based systems having targeting and guidance controls sufficient to damage major cities throughout the Soviet Union.

Mao's warnings against "madmen" and "intimidation" justified the nuclear weapons program on two counts: deterrence and status. His rationale reflected the universal Chinese reaction to the "century of shame and humiliation" suffered at the hands of foreign powers because of Middle Kingdom weakness. That century began with the Opium War of 1839. It ended with American intervention in the Chinese civil war in 1950, thereby denying to Mao Taiwan as well as final victory over Chiang Kai-shek. The unbroken record of submission and defeat, save against Japan in World War II, rankled all Chinese.

How might this capability, acquired for limited defensive reasons, ultimately be used? Can Beijing's oft-repeated pledge never to use nuclear weapons first be taken at face value? At times Moscow has acted as though it had some uncertainty on this score. In the summer of 1969 low-level Soviet diplomats sounded out their foreign counterparts over the likely response to a "surgical strike" against Chinese nuclear production facilities. That June Soviet bombers were deployed from East Europe to Central Asia, where they ran mock attack exer-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cises against targets in northwest China, the locus of nuclear production facilities. As a precaution, Washington signaled its strong opposition, and Moscow made no further move.

Whether the 1969 moves represented a bluff to force Chinese concessions on the disputed border, where bloody clashes had broken out, or reflected some contingency plan may never be known. Soviet concern over a possible Chinese nuclear attack may have contributed to acquisition of an antiballistic missile system around Moscow, combined with extensive evacuation and shelter programs throughout the USSR. In early 1980 Brezhnev engaged in a dramatic display of temper before a French journalist, reportedly warning the United States against providing China with technology that would enhance its nuclear capability. Perhaps this was an instance of staged theatrics, but that the topic was held to justify this riposte suggests the Kremlin's perception of the problem.

In view of the overwhelming superiority of the Soviet nuclear arsenal, little of which could be destroyed by the size or accuracy of a Chinese first strike, Mao's allusion to "madmen" would have to be echoed in Moscow for Soviet planners to conceive seriously of a Chinese leader deliberately initiating a bilateral exchange. Perhaps this "nth" possibility was of concern to the Kremlin in the immediate aftermath of Mao's Cultural Revolution, when xenophobic violence provoked clashes and raised tensions along China's frontiers with the Soviet Union, Vietnam, and Hong Kong.

More likely, however, is a worrisome Soviet scenario that links a possible Chinese attack with a global Soviet-American strategic exchange, transforming the two bilateral equations into a trilateral one. This need not be openly specified by a formal Sino-American agreement or even spelled out in a secret protocol. As Beijing and Washington continue to emphasize their "common strategic interests," bolstered by high-level military consultation and high-technology transfer, the implications for Soviet defense analysts are sufficiently ambiguous to require contingency plans that include combined strikes against Chinese weapons systems as well as against the panoply of American land, sea, and airborne strategic systems.

There is no way to determine the degree of damage-acceptance that Soviet strategic analysts impute to the Chinese. A *self-confident* estimate would depict Beijing striving to avoid any involvement in a Soviet-American conflict to minimize China's losses, while the superpowers mutually reduce, if not destroy, their military capacity. An *anxious* estimate might emphasize the Chinese unwillingness to risk a possible Soviet ascendancy in the postwar environment, thereby prompting a Chinese attack in the context of a global war, regardless of the cost. Given the conservative nature of Soviet military planning and the vested interests engaged in bureaucratic battles over budget, the "worst case" contingency is likely to be pressed, regardless of the absence of real world verisimilitude.

To this extent, China's nuclear capability may increase the stability of relationships within the Moscow-Beijing-Washington triangle. It can further deter a possible Soviet attack against China, already a highly unlikely contingency. It may also contribute to deterring an attack against NATO and the United States. Yet it will not become so powerful as to increase China's willingness to invite war with either superpower. On the negative side, a burgeoning Chinese ICBM

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inventory will complicate SALT III, should such negotiations eventuate. It is difficult to envisage Beijing's participation, given its confrontation with Moscow, yet it is equally difficult to foresee how two sides of the strategic triangle can agree on mutual limits without reference to the third side.

The Conventional Threat: Soviet and Chinese Fears

Perceptions in Moscow and Beijing mix objective reality with subjective fear to produce a level of tension that is difficult to defuse, manifest in more than ten years of force buildup throughout the 4,650 miles of border separating the two communist giants. Therefore, if U.S. policy is to pursue a prudent course toward both, it is necessary to appreciate the frames of reference within which Moscow and Beijing view one another.

Soviet military planners have long faced the need to safeguard the Trans-Siberian railroad as the only overland means of transportation to the Soviet Far East, including the major naval base at Vladivostok. For approximately 175 miles of its north-south run between this port and the industrial center of Khabarovsk, the tracks lie within ten miles of Chinese territory, with the nearest approach only one and one-half miles from the Ussuri river boundary.

This logistical lifeline was in jeopardy during the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s. In 1969 Sino-Soviet clashes at Damansky Island (Zhenbao) in the Ussuri highlighted the potential vulnerability of the Soviet Far East to adventuresome, if not aggressive, behavior on the part of neighboring China. The degree of concern is reflected in the fact that construction of a second railroad traversing East and Far East Siberia was first conceived in 1932, with its actual alignment determined in 1938-42. The Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM, as it came to be known) lapsed into relative obscurity after World War II, but design work was renewed in 1967, coincidental with the peak of Cultural Revolution violence.

BAM will not be completed before 1985, at which time it will offer a safer alternative to the Trans-Siberian, running more than 160 miles from the Chinese border for most of its course. However, this will not solve the north-south transit problem, because the sea route from BAM's terminus at Sovetskaya Gavan to Vladivostok, aside from involving cumbersome transshipment, will have problems with ice throughout the winter.

More general Soviet perceptions focus on the disparity in overall population between the two countries. This becomes particularly worrisome if the approximately 12 million occupants of Siberia's eastern sector are juxtaposed with the 70 million in northeast China, much less the aggregate billion or more in all of China. The image of empty land beckoning an overcrowded and expansionist neighbor haunts many Russians, as is evident from even casual conversation. Soviet propaganda has not helped to calm this fear. On the contrary, during the 1969 clashes, the renowned poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko exploited the "yellow peril" demonology in an epic poem that linked the Chinese Communists with the Mongol hordes who overran Moscovy centuries ago.

These abstract fears were reinforced in 1964, when Mao raised the prospect of recovering "lost territory" taken by Tsarist Russia from Manchu China through the so-called unequal treaties. Speaking with a visiting Japanese delega-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion, Mao remarked, "A hundred years ago [the Russians] incorporated the territory to the east of Lake Baikal, including Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and the Kamchatka peninsula. Those accounts are difficult to settle, and we have not settled these accounts with them." Beijing did not repudiate the Japanese report of this conversation, which received widespread attention at the time.

After the March 1969 incidents, PRC officials formally declared that they had no claim against the extensive land transferred by the nineteenth century treaties, claiming that only small areas along the border remained in dispute. Nevertheless, they demanded that Moscow acknowledge that such treaties were "unequal." Moscow has steadfastly resisted this on the ground that such an admission could be used to reopen claim to the entire area. It is difficult to determine to what extent the respective statements are negotiatory posturing as compared with irreducible positions, but until they are reconciled, no border settlement can be reached. In the meantime, those responsible for defense in Moscow will continue to place the Chinese military development in the context of potential threats to Soviet territory.

The ultimate anxiety of some Soviet specialists in Asian affairs is a Sino-Japanese entente that would form an anti-Soviet front on the basis of common racial and cultural ties. This "worst case" worry in some respects exceeds the more conventional concern over a Sino-American alliance. Moscow's propaganda media reacted virulently to announcement of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship in August 1978, although it was merely symbolic recognition of the substantive change in relations dating back to Prime Minister Tanaka's normalization visit to Beijing in 1972. Particularly nettlesome was the joint pledge against "hegemony," China's code word for Soviet power, despite Article 4, which avowed that nothing in the treaty affected the relations of either side with any third party.

These different areas and levels of Sinophobia affect Soviet reactions to China and its interaction with other countries in various ways, some of which appear incredible or irrational to outside observers. To what extent this will persist over the coming years is impossible to say. However, the mind sets that prevail in different sectors of the Soviet policy elite, particularly the military, deserve careful consideration by others whose behavior can exacerbate Sino-Soviet tension. This is especially relevant in the case of arms sales and technology transfer to the PRC, to be discussed below.

Chinese perceptions of the Soviet threat are even more rooted in a historical heritage of aggression and duplicity, the results of which were the overt loss of land and the covert penetration of China's borderlands. These perceptions are compounded by an acute awareness of present military inferiority. China's active defense capacity against Soviet air and missile attack is virtually nil. Its jet fighters are woefully obsolete, for the most part lacking air-to-air missiles and all-weather capability. Radar systems, computer centers, and communications facilities are wholly inadequate to what would be needed to meet the range of conceivable attack in size, composition, and mission. On the ground, China has no sophisticated antitank systems such as TOW or HOT to counter, for instance, a massive armored assault across the hard, flat desert plains of Xinjiang that border Soviet Central Asia. Soviet submarines and mines could strangle coastal and foreign shipping any time Moscow chose to blockade the few key ports that service this important trade.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Aside from these areas of military inferiority, Chinese policymakers fear Soviet subversion of non-Han peoples who dominate the border areas and who have traditionally been receptive to external support for revolt against Chinese rule. This applies especially to Xinjiang, which Beijing officially accused Moscow of seeking to separate in 1962. There, Turki peoples of Moslem faith include Uighurs, Kazakhs, and Kirghiz, with ethnic kinsmen across the border. In 1944-45 Moscow manipulated tensions to spark an uprising that successfully excluded Chinese authority until the Communist take-over in 1949. In 1962 upwards of eighty thousand fled across the Soviet border to escape economic deprivation as a result of Mao's abortive Great Leap Forward. Beijing finally sealed off the frontier and expelled all Soviet consular officials, effectively snuffing out potential resistance.

To the north, a Soviet military buildup, beginning in 1965, expanded to the Mongolian People's Republic, where armored divisions and airfields appeared by 1968-69. Beijing's concerns grew apace, but accelerated after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia prompted alarm over a possible parallel intervention during the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution. With nuclear missiles ringing the northeast border and a doubling of the total Soviet strength arrayed against China, it is no wonder that Beijing sounded the alarm of possible surprise attack in 1969. Since then, Soviet forces have been steadily strengthened and improved in capability.

To the south, the 1978 Moscow-Hanoi treaty added fresh cause for Chinese concern with its clause on military consultation in case of threat. China's subsequent invasion of Vietnam expanded the Soviet air and naval presence in Danang and Cam Ranh Bay. Meanwhile, Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia increased Hanoi's dependence on bloc economic and military aid, enlarging the number of Soviet advisors severalfold.

Thus, more than a decade of developments give Chinese charges of Soviet encirclement prima facie plausibility, although the situation is in part the result of Chinese actions both during the Cultural Revolution and, more recently, in Indochina. As in Moscow, perception defines reality for the policymaker in Beijing. The circle of action-reaction has been closed for too long to permit political disengagement and dispassionate reassessment.

Sino-Soviet War or Peace?

Except for the period 1969-70, alarmist prognostications of a Sino-Soviet war have been grossly exaggerated. Neither the issues nor the incidents have been sufficiently serious or threatening to prompt the two colossi into what could be a catastrophe for either or both. Each side has suffered too much devastation from war within living memory for the leadership to risk its reoccurence over anything less vital than national survival. No such interest is at stake now or in the prospective future.

However, the absence of war need not mean actual peace. The Sino-Soviet dispute has more than twenty years of patterned behavior and conditioned reflex that combine to perpetuate confrontation. Bureaucratic inertia is a formidable obstacle to change. Propaganda can become self-convincing over time. Vested interests, particularly military, dwell on "worst case" hypothetical situations to argue for more vigilance and against compromise. At a deeper level,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nationalistic passions fuel controversy, and racial antagonism sharpens negative stereotypes.

In addition to these elements that work against the elimination of tension, third party relations heighten hostility. Sino-Soviet competition is exploited by North Korea and Vietnam to enhance their leverage in obtaining aid from one side or the other. A sense of zero-sum game induces an exaggerated response to apparent gains in seeking Japan's favor or its economic cooperation. Soviet and Chinese spokesmen compulsively inveigh against one another in U.N. forums, while their proxies do battle in nonaligned conferences, advancing their own interests while exacerbating the Sino-Soviet dispute. These external situations contribute to the dynamics of the bilateral relationship.

Under these circumstances, most observers have ruled out the possibility of any significant reduction in Sino-Soviet tension. This offers the United States and NATO a quasi ally against Soviet expansionism, provided that China can be strengthened sufficiently to divert Moscow's military forces from potential aggression elsewhere. Although such calculations have much to commend them, the logic of a border settlement may ultimately prove persuasive in Beijing as well as in Moscow. So long as the border remains in dispute, local incidents are more likely, raising the risk of escalation into serious fighting. Much of the frontier has no natural line of demarcation. It divides peoples of common nationality whose economic activity, such as fishing or herding, often flows indiscriminately across political boundaries. Border patrols wander unwittingly into neighboring territory or pursue refugees and suspect elements across the frontier.

In short, the situation is inherently explosive. However, it can be defused by a compromise settlement or, as in the Sino-Indian and Sino-Japanese cases, by simply setting the issue aside. Most of the territory claimed by China to be in dispute is of relatively little economic importance. The only strategically significant areas involve two largely uninhabited islands at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri rivers, and the so-called Pamir knot at the juncture of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, and China. The islands not only command this vital river juncture, but also lie immediately opposite Khabarovsk. The plateau high in the Pamirs provides access through adjoining passes to Soviet and Chinese territory. Neither claim will be conceded by Moscow. The remaining items of dispute, such as whether the river boundary line is the main channel or the median line, are negotiable, provided that both sides wish to settle.

This wish could come from economic considerations as well as from concern over the risks of escalation, if a drawdown of the military forces in confrontation was to accompany a border settlement. A serious labor shortage confronts Moscow as it attempts to develop East and Far East Siberia. Beijing has no labor shortage, but troops assigned to passive defense could be assigned to more economically productive activity such as afforestation and irrigation. Both sides could realize some reduction in their defense budget that might go toward easing sorely pressed consumer demands should the drawdown of forces permit it.

If these pragmatic arguments in themselves were overriding, they would have prevailed long before now. But should other circumstances point toward a convergence of Chinese and Soviet interest in reducing bilateral tension, a bor-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

der settlement and a mutual drawdown of forces could constitute the basis for a limited détente.

Whatever may be the likelihood of such eventuality, it need not arouse alarm elsewhere. The Sino-Soviet alliance cannot be revived. Too much blood has been spilled, both figuratively and literally, for either side to rely on the other for national security. As for a division of the world into spheres of interest, this proved impossible even during the 1950s, when the alliance was in force. No such agreement on who will prevail where is conceivable now that Moscow has acquired clients in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East.

The principal negative effect of a Sino-Soviet détente, so far as American interests are concerned, would be on Taiwan. A border settlement would free the PLA to apply pressure in the Taiwan Strait without concern over a Soviet attack. Anticipation of such pressure could arouse anxiety on the island, further heightening tensions that might already exist because of internal political or economic problems. Objectively, however, the main deterrent against a PRC threat of blockade or invasion is China's economic dependence on Japan and the United States. An embargo on trade and technology transfer by these two countries could seriously damage the mainland's plans for economic modernization. Therefore, Taiwan need not be seriously jeopardized by a reduction in Sino-Soviet tensions.

On the positive side, détente would permit agreement between Moscow and Beijing on issues that cannot be resolved at present, in part because the two sides invariably take opposite positions. For example, the management of ocean resources has not yet proved susceptible to resolution on a global basis, despite nearly a decade of conferences on a Law of the Sea. However, regional arrangements for exploitation of the continental shelf, control of pollution from offshore drilling, and fishing—all in the context of the new 200-mile economic zone—could operate on a multilateral, rather than a bilateral or unilateral, basis. This would reduce the possibility of confrontation and conflict in northeast Asia, where historic interactions have produced a triangle of tension among Russia, China, and Japan.

Furthermore, better relations between Moscow and Beijing could facilitate settlement of the Korean question. Because China, the Soviet Union, and the United States are committed to one side or the other in the event of war in the peninsula, a final and formal resolution of the relationship between North and South is of mutual interest. Sino-American détente prompted the first breakthrough in negotiations between Pyongyang and Seoul in 1971-72. A parallel Sino-Soviet development might persuade Pyongyang that it could no longer exploit the dispute to its own advantage and that therefore a compromise agreement is the wisest course to follow.

A choice between the two remote extremes of Sino-Soviet war or détente finds the latter more to the world's advantage than the former. Should these gigantic neighbors fight a major war, it might well involve nuclear weapons. The consequences could be far-reaching, if only through removing the tacit, but universally observed, prohibition against atomic warfare. Against this worst future, the best situation might appear to be a perpetual dispute, wherein the two largest communist countries are encouraged to feud but not fight. But the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prolonged playing off of Sino-Soviet tensions is, to paraphrase Franklin Roosevelt, like shooting craps with destiny. These considerations leave a Sino-Soviet détente as a preferable prospect, unlikely as it is in the foreseeable future.

U.S. Interests

U.S. policy has benefitted from the Sino-Soviet dispute in one way or another for nearly twenty years. By 1955 the "pactomania" of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, together with the aloof American attitude toward neutral nations, had left the United States odd man out in much of what was then known as the Afro-Asian world. Meanwhile, Zhou Enlai managed to ingratiate himself and China with such neutral leaders as Nehru, U Nu, Sukarno, and Nasser. Beijing simultaneously capitalized on the image of Sino-Soviet unity as representing the wave of the future for Communist parties ready to follow the Chinese path of armed struggle.

But after 1960 the break between Beijing and Moscow, followed by mutual denunciation and polemical exchanges, prompted much of the Third World to reassess relations with both sides to the advantage of the United States. Over the next two decades this reaction gradually spread. In 1979 Moscow sought to manipulate the nonaligned nations through its Cuban proxy. But the backlash swung away from rhetorical attacks against "U.S. imperialilsm," culminating in the massive majority of 103 votes in the General Assembly of the United Nations condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Washington won more than debating points from the Sino-Soviet dispute. In the Indochina war, Moscow and Beijing were able to help Hanoi separately, but they could not cooperate to confront American power. This reduced the threat of escalation and left Hanoi less certain of support, particularly where it required coordinated effort, as in the overland transportation of equipment and supplies. In 1972 President Nixon's dramatic display of summitry in Beijing and Moscow, the latter after the U.S. mining and bombing of Haiphong, angered Hanoi and lowered Vietnamese morale.

The most significant gain, however, was achievement of a Sino-American détente without the immediate sacrificing of U.S. interests on Taiwan. In late 1968 Chinese perceptions of a Soviet threat prompted Mao and Zhou to seek to offset that threat through improved relations with the United States. The result was the celebrated Shanghai Communique of February 28, 1972, wherein Beijing tacitly acquiesced in the status quo on Taiwan, against which it had inveighed for more than twenty years. By 1978 the Soviet threat had faded somewhat, but overall relations between Moscow and Beijing remained bad. This permitted President Carter to complete the normalization process and terminate the defense treaty with Taiwan, confident that no undue consequences would follow, at least in the near future.

Beyond these direct gains, side effects also accrued to the American advantage. The Sino-Soviet confrontation drew off nearly thirty Soviet divisions that otherwise might have been deployed against NATO or objectives elsewhere. To be sure, there is no evidence to suggest that Moscow would have attacked West Europe had it not confronted a hostile China. Nevertheless, the NATO defense posture was improved because one fourth of Soviet military power was tied down on the China front.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Other gains are mixed. Japan no longer need listen to constant harangues from both communist neighbors against security ties with the United States, for China now approves the American-Japanese alliance as a barrier to Soviet expansionism, while the Soviet Union has muted its opposition somewhat in order to compete for influence in Tokyo. But, while the competition permits Japan to advance its economic interests by participating in the development of Siberia as well as China, it forces Japan to tread somewhat cautiously to avoid appearing to favor one side over the other.

Similarly, ASEAN's fear of Chinese expansionism has ended. In the late 1970s Beijing's anxiety over Moscow's growing influence in Indochina prompted it to strengthen governmental relations at the expense of local communist insurgencies, particularly in Thailand and Malaysia. Again, however, the positive gain is offset by the intractability and volatility of internecine communist warfare in the peninsula, which has been significantly worsened by intrusion of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

On balance, the gains to U.S. policy from the dispute clearly outweigh the losses. This provides one rationale for bolstering China's military capability, thereby enabling it to be more self-confident in confronting Soviet efforts at encirclement, whether in Southeast Asia, South Asia, or elsewhere. While the dynamics of the dispute are not directly subject to outside influence, it is argued that the availability of weapons and military technology can help to convince the Chinese of the advantage in cooperating with the West against Soviet expansionism, while reconfirming Soviet suspicions that Beijing is implacably hostile to Moscow. A second rationale, related, but subsidiary, to the first, is the alleged leverage on Soviet policy inherent in the so-called China card. This term, although highly publicized in the media, was consistently denied as reflecting official policy, despite various actions, particularly by Henry Kissinger, that implied the contrary. In any event, it ceased to have any relevance after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, when the Carter Administration abandoned negotiation for confrontation. It remains to be seen whether this rationale will return at some future time.

Two sets of consideration caution against a simple acceptance of the assumptions underlying these arguments: the effect on Soviet policy and the consequences for China's neighbors elsewhere in Asia. To take the Soviet aspects first, analysis is complicated by Moscow's steady drumfire of attack against Beijing and any implication of collusion with Washington. How much this is merely propaganda as compared with genuine policy is difficult to determine.

Logically, foreign assistance in China's military modernization should not seriously trouble the Kremlin, because it will fall far short of making the PLA equal with, much less superior to, the Soviet armed forces. While China's defensive capability can be significantly improved in conventional weapons, there is little likelihood that its offensive power can pose a major threat to the USSR, excepting perhaps the Soviet Far East, for the remainder of this century. The technological and production gaps are simply too great to be overcome in the next twenty years, given China's acute deficiencies in capital, sophisticated equipment, and the appropriately skilled human resources in science, engineering, and military management.

But perception and politics can confound reality and logic. What objectively may be a reasonable defensive development can appear subjectively to have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provocative offensive implications. This is especially true in deep-seated and long-standing hostile relationships such as the Sino-Soviet conflict. This in turn challenges the assumption expressed in the earlier quotation from Vice-President Mondale to the effect that strengthening China's defense will reduce the likelihood of a Soviet attack and thereby improve stability in Asia.

Earlier, the Carter Administration had sanctioned NATO weapons sales to China. Then, in the aftermath of Afghanistan, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown toured Chinese military installations, after which he announced Washington's willingness to sell "nonlethal" items, including radar, computers, and trucks, on a case-by-case basis. Nothing being negotiated in the way of weapons and technology sales down to mid-1980 between China and the West would now justify alarm in Moscow, even within the framework of highly distorted and subjective perceptions. Such transactions, however, will become increasingly sensitive and complex during the 1980s should more advanced systems combine with a thickening military relationship, signaling an American willingness to provide Beijing with a significant modern military capability.

Soviet concern is not the expression of a simple paranoia. So long as China contests territory controlled by the USSR, the possibility exists that aggressive local activity will trigger clashes, as happened in 1969. The volatility of Chinese politics and the xenophobia of the people, both dramatically evident during the Cultural Revolution, offer little assurance that this irrational behavior will not occur again. The Soviet Far East remains vulnerable to a sudden attack that could cripple the base of Soviet power in the Pacific. Wholly apart from the exaggerated fears that derive from the great disparity in population, such concerns cannot be ignored by Moscow's defense officials. Their influence on the policy process will, of course, vary from one time to another. However, the Soviet assessment of the motives behind foreign support for China's military forces, together with an appeal for a compensatory strengthening of Soviet defenses, is generally likely to carry considerable weight. Neither aspect of this military argument is calculated to improve relations between the United States and the Soviet Union or stabilize the situation in East Asia.

Other U.S. interests in Asia call into question the wisdom of strengthening China's military capability. First and foremost is the matter of Taiwan. China refuses to foreswear the use of force, if necessary, to recover its sovereign territory and to end its civil war. There is little likelihood of this eventuality at present, and it remains remote so long as Beijing remains committed to economic modernization through foreign technology transfer. But future leaders and policies are unpredictable.

Korea presents a less worrisome prospect so far as China's intentions are concerned. Beijing, to the extent that it can, is likely to restrain Pyongyang from testing Washington's commitment to defend Seoul. But China's defense commitment remains in force should war break out in the peninsula. Moreover, China's willingness to supplant Soviet military aid to North Korea in the mid-1970s testifies to Beijing's mixed interests, driven both by a desire to avoid hostilities and by competition for influence in Pyongyang.

China's borders with India and Vietnam remain in dispute, as they are with the Soviet Union. No serious hostilities have occurred on the high Himalayan frontier since 1962. New Delhi and Beijing have hinted at improved relations at

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

various times, most recently when Prime Minister Indira Ghandi met privately with Premier Hua Guo-feng at Marshal Tito's funeral. Nevertheless, so long as the line of demarcation is at issue, Indian defense policy must take into account Chinese military strength and deployment. In addition, it must calculate prospects for the tacit Sino-Pakistani alliance. India's response has been to seek Soviet arms to meet those needs that cannot be fulfilled elsewhere, most recently manifest in an agreement to purchase $1.6 billion in arms from Moscow. This runs counter to U.S interests, as became clear when Washington tried to forge a united anti-Soviet front in South Asia after the invasion of Afghanistan.

In the case of Vietnam, the marginal areas of mountain and jungle purportedly contested by both sides do not pose a serious problem in themselves. However, in the context of the Vietnamese persecution and expulsion of Chinese residents, and Hanoi's invasion of Kampuchea (Cambodia), border incidents served as a pretext for the PLA invasion of Vietnam in early 1979. Whatever aims China may have had in "teaching Vietnam a lesson," one consequence was the expansion of Soviet presence and influence in Indochina as a result of Hanoi's increased dependence for bloc economic and military assistance. This is of special concern to the ASEAN nations, whose hopes for keeping further great power conflict out of Southeast Asia eroded with the Soviet-Vietnamese treaty of November 1978 and ended with the Chinese invasion three months later.

Some observers argue that it serves U.S. interests to embroil China in the containment of Vietnamese expansionism. Others question the utility and morality of encouraging continued bloodshed in Indochina after nearly four decades of recurrent warfare. The decimation of Kampuchea is now a literal possibility. But all agree that further Chinese pressure on Vietnam will increase the Soviet presence in Southeast Asia, a prospect that may be heightened by strengthening the PLA.

China's maritime disputes, actual and potential, add another dimension of latent conflict with the interests of the United States and its allies. The Senkaku islands (Diao Yudai), uninhabited rocks northeast of Taiwan near the Ryukyus, may provide access to rich deposits of oil embedded in the continental shelf. Administered and patrolled by Japan, they are also claimed by Taiwan and the PRC. In May 1978 hundreds of mainland fishermen suddenly appeared in boats with electronic and military gear. For two days they sailed nearby with signs asserting Chinese ownership. No official explanation or public disavowal came from Beijing to offset the storm of media attention in Tokyo, much to the embarrassment of Prime Minister Fukuda, who was moving toward the final stages of a treaty of peace and friendship. Nor did Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping offer to abandon the claim, despite the "China fever" that attended his sweepingly successful visit to Japan in October for the formal signing of the treaty. Instead, Deng adroitly asserted that the matter could be better disposed of "by the next generation."

Over the subsequent year PRC officials proposed joint Sino-Japanese exploration of the Senkaku waters in a cooperative search for oil, without prejudice to either side's claim. Tokyo understandably refused to compromise what it saw as its exclusive prerogative and its superior technological capacity for offshore drilling. However, the proposal implicitly raised the larger question of conti-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nental shelf ownership throughout the Yellow and East China seas, where vast reserves of offshore oil are believed to lie at exploitable depths. Until the PRC clarifies its stand, the potential for conflict with North and South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan in pursuit of these invaluable deposits remains. In the absence of a global Law of the Sea, China can legitimately press its claim on one of two grounds. The continental shelf may be said to belong legally to the state from whose territory it extends. Alternatively, a median line drawn between that state and others bordering common waters may divide ownership accordingly.

Which of these alternatives Beijing will eventually pursue cannot be predicted today. Much will depend on political and economic calculations, domestic as well as foreign. However, China's ability to assert its claims aggressively requires the improvement of its naval capability. Foreign assistance in this effort would seem particularly ill-advised.

Beijing's willingness to use force in pursuit of its objectives at sea was dramatically revealed in January 1974 when the PLA smashed South Vietnam's symbolic occupation of the Paracel islands in the South China Sea. PRC maps lay claim to various islands, reefs, and shoals throughout the area, virtually ringing the strategic waterway with alleged Chinese sovereignty. This adds another element of conflict to Sino-Vietnamese relations. Although Hanoi controls some of the Spratley islands, others are held by the Philippines and Taiwan. Beijing and Manila disagree also over the Macclesfield Bank and the Reed Bank, both of which hold the promise of oil for the Philippines.

Unlike the situation in the Yellow and East China seas, the continental shelf issue is not present in the South China Sea. The problem is more complicated because it involves the prerogatives that flow from the ownership of virtual dots of coral as well as occupied islands. In addition, the 200-mile economic zone extends key aspects of traditional territorial sovereignty, formerly limited to 3 miles but now conventionally put at 12 miles. While the PRC has not formally defined its position in the South China Sea, its reactions to ships in distress imply a readiness to claim it in its entirety. As the main passageway between the West Pacific and the Indian Ocean, this could have far-reaching implications should China acquire the naval capacity to enforce its claim.

None of these situations is of immediate concern. The leadership in Beijing has not threatened to put its words into action, except in the case of Vietnam. Even here Beijing faces severe military limitations, exacerbated by its uncertainty about Moscow's willingness to help Hanoi with direct assistance or through supplying modern air and sea defense systems. No state confronting China's claims in this area can rest easy with the prospect of a strengthened PLA, especially one that can draw on foreign sources of weapons and technology.

China: What Next?

Underlying all these issues are the questions: What kind of China will emerge in the coming decades? Has the post-Mao leadership stabilized, and are its policy priorities firmly in place? Or, can the pendulum swing back again to the nativistic, xenophobic, virulent China of the Cultural Revolution?

These questions have no certain answers, although a cautious consensus exists among foreign observers. In the near term they see little change in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

men who rule China, their means, and their objectives. The ten years of turmoil before Mao's death in 1976 are too vivid and painful a memory for any repetition to be permitted by the present regime. Moreover, the absence of Mao leaves no comparable figure to launch an attack by idealistic or disgruntled outsiders against the elite now in power. Finally, the commitment to economic modernization through dependence on foreign capital and technology seems certain to continue for at least five years, perhaps ten.

But beyond this point, conjecture becomes mere speculation. It may be argued that success in the "four modernizations" will induce a willingness to integrate China into the global economy, accepting interdependence as both necessary and desirable, as, for instance, in the exchange of energy exports for grain imports. This in turn may facilitate compromise solutions of the various territorial disputes and conflicts of interest between China and its neighbors. Alternatively, however, success in economic growth may infuse a sense of self-confidence that China need not defer to the outside world, enabling it to pursue with impunity its claims against neighboring regimes. Similarly, failure in achieving economic goals may result in caution and dependence on others, or it may evoke a bitter backlash against the compromising of territorial claims for the sake of economic relations with the capitalist countries.

Much will depend on the perceptions and experiences of the next generation of leadership in Beijing. The present elite, elder statesmen in their seventies and eighties, is dominated by Deng Xiaoping. In February 1980 the fifth plenum of the eleventh central committee of the CCP took a series of steps that moved Deng's closest associates into various positions of power, while ousting his few remaining Cultural Revolution opponents. The new appointees, principally in their sixties, are almost certainly intended to assure continuity after Deng's death.

Thus it is possible to discern the likely composition of Beijing's leadership for the 1980s. But it is impossible to predict the people and the policies that will govern China's actions ten years hence. Yet that is the time when the cumulative effect of economic and military modernization will offer new options in foreign policy. Perhaps in the interim the PRC will have settled its border grievances and compromised its various claims at sea. Sino-Soviet relations may have settled down to a state of political competition in Third World areas without the danger of bilateral confrontation. If these conditions should obtain, China's strength will contribute to stability. No domestic division will tempt foreign powers to exploit China's weakness or prompt Beijing's rulers to belligerence in a defiant reaction to perceived threats.

However, some or all of the present issues that are outstanding between China and its neighbors may remain active a decade from now, just as they have remained on the agenda for the last decade or more. Whether the problem immediately concerns communist or noncommunist countries, the implications for the United States, its allies, and its friends in Asia cannot be favorable. China's sheer size gives it a capacity to send shock waves throughout the region, with economic and political reverberations, as during the Cultural Revolution's peak years of violence in 1967-68 and again with the invasion of Vietnam in 1979.

This does not mean that the United States should keep China weak by thwarting its effort to improve living standards and to modernize its economy. This policy would be wrong on two counts. First, it would sow the seeds of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

future emnity between more than one fifth of the world's population and those who are perceived as hostile to its welfare. This was the heritage of China's past experience at the hands of foreign imperialism. Second, a weak China can invite foreign exploitation of its vulnerabilities, resulting in serious tension and, perhaps, war. In 1962 perceptions of this possibility in Beijing triggered a brief crisis in the Taiwan Strait and on the Xinjiang border, while Indian military moves transformed such perceptions into reality, culminating in the Sino-Indian conflict that fall.

But helping China to be economically viable and to raise its living standards need not commit the West to facilitate an across-the-board modernization of the PLA. No problem arises in the provision of mobile radar, helicopters, trucks, and transport aircraft, as announced during Deputy Premier Geng Biao's visit to Washington in 1980. In fact, some of these items were already available from the Soviet Union, albeit without the accompanying publicity. However, serious questions attend the upgrading of fighter aircraft and tanks, two areas of serious obsolescence that have interested Chinese military missions sent to Western Europe. Even more difficult problems occur with technology transfers that have spillover effects from civilian to military use, as with electronics and computers. A simple embargo against conventional weapons may reassure China's smaller neighbors, but the provision of technology that will improve strategic weapons systems can be genuinely alarming to Moscow.

This raises the broader question of Soviet-American relations. This wider perspective must be clarified before a policy on Sino-American military relations can be fully defined. If Soviet expansionism is seen as inexorable and susceptible to being checked only by countervailing military power, then Moscow's reaction should not inhibit the West in strengthening China, whether as a tacit or a full ally. If, however, the Soviet-American relationship is to be a blend of confrontation and cooperation, whereby coercion and persuasion mix military deterrence with economic inducements, then each move that increases Beijing's potential anti-Soviet posture must be assessed for its impact in Moscow.

Uncertainty between these two policy frameworks argues for extreme care in the provision of weapons and technology. For one thing, there is the agenda of unfinished business with China's neighbors, already identified, wherein a stronger PLA can increase pressure contrary to U.S. interests. In addition, it is questionable how much Beijing can or will contribute to halting Soviet expansionism beyond the present diversion of Soviet forces around China's periphery. These forces are not likely to increase significantly, given the rate and type of military modernization that can be anticipated in the PLA over the next decade. Meanwhile, China will not be able to project its power off the Asian mainland sufficiently to safeguard the sea-lanes between Japan and the Middle East, for example, much less provide troops to engage Soviet or Cuban forces in the Middle East and Africa. Finally, the asymmetry of power that favors the USSR over China along the extensive border from Xinjiang to the Far East will probably prevent Beijing from undertaking any direct confrontation with Moscow except where its immediate and vital interests are at stake.

In all fairness, it must be noted that Chinese behavior has carefully avoided any hasty or extreme move either to cement military relations with the West or to offer help in stemming Soviet expansionism. While Deputy Premier Deng

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Xiaoping speaks loosely in interviews of "an alliance against the polar bear" linking NATO, Japan, and the United States with China, sometimes including "the Third World," more official formulations in high-level meetings carefully avoid this terminology. Neither during Secretary Brown's visit to China nor the Geng Biao visit to the United States did the Chinese side go beyond assertions of "friendship" and "common strategic interests." Beijing has not shown any urgency in acquiring weapons abroad, despite considerable window-shopping and exploratory discussions.

This does not wholly negate the military value of China as an additional offset to growing Soviet power and influence, particularly in Asia. It does, however, call for a comprehensive and consistent set of policies that embed the Sino-American military relationship in the larger context of Soviet-American relations, and that takes into account also our relations with China's neighbors, whether as allies, friends, or adversaries. Short-run tactical moves can arouse long-term expectations on all sides, China included. Arms sales and technology transfers carry subjective implications in addition to other more obvious consequences. This is particularly true with China, where image and reality so often diverge.

Sino-American relations have been fully normalized only since January 1, 1979, when full diplomatic relations were established between the People's Republic of China and the United States. The Carter Administration thereby brought to completion the process initiated by President Nixon in 1971-72. It is understandable that much of what transpired during these years of transition appeared episodic on the surface, however systematic the policy design may have been within successive administrations. Final terms of the American relationship with Taiwan had to be negotiated with Beijing; domestic politics acted as a major constraint on the public discussion of policy; the Soviet relationship was an additional point of concern, particularly in regard to SALT II.

With the 1980 presidential election out of the way, however, the time will have come for Washington to debate and define its policy toward both Beijing and Moscow. This cannot be unilaterally determined, but must evolve in close consultation with our major Asian ally, Japan, whose interest in, and involvement with, both communist powers is of prime importance. It should also take into consideration the divergent views of ASEAN members who are immediately affected by Sino-Soviet rivalry. Fundamentally, however, it must be grounded in an appreciation of long-range American interests and objectives as they are likely to be affected by China's modernization during the balance of this century.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JORGE I. DOMÍNGUEZ

The United States and Its Regional Security Interests: The Caribbean, Central, and South America

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY is not a fixed commodity but an evolving bargaining relationship among allies and adversaries. For the United States, international security means shaping an external environment where the political, social, and economic values embodied in its institutions and practices can survive and flourish, and where its territorial integrity is preserved. Military force is one instrument to achieve these ends. In this paper I will discuss seven topics regarding U.S. security in the Western Hemisphere, paying special attention to its military and political aspects. Two of these are relations with adversaries, such as the Soviet Union and Cuba, but five others are relations between the United States and its hemispheric allies (other than Canada). These are the sharing of security burdens, conflicts among Latin American states, internal security, international economic security, and conflicts with the United States. Indeed, this listing suggests two of the main themes of this essay: the problematic nature of U.S. security relations with generally, but not always, friendly neighbors to the south, and the rising primacy of economic conflict between Latin America and the United States.

Burden Sharing

Latin American countries generally have been unwilling and unable to share the burdens of hemispheric alliance maintenance. This is not unique to U.S. relations with its southern neighbors—the United States has comparable concerns in its relations with Western Europe and Japan—but it has considerable importance for the assessment of hemispheric security relations.

Security relations have been formalized in the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, signed in Rio de Janeiro in 1947. The Rio Pact, as it is commonly known, has been supplemented over the years by bilateral treaties whereby the United States has provided military assistance to most Latin American countries. Another key document is the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS), which includes responsibility for the maintenance of the peace in the hemisphere.[1] There has never been a combined permanent military organization, as has characterized NATO, nor even some of the more explicit military arrangements of other U.S. alliances. An institution such as the Inter-American Defense Board is quite weak. It serves primarily to exchange

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

information, provide advice, and establish contacts among participating military officers. It has no major operational significance and no forces under its direct command. Although its members appeared to pull together in reaction to guerrilla movements and subversion in the 1960s, that sense of shared mission and analysis weakened in the following decade. One of its principal accomplishments was the foundation in 1962 of the Inter-American War College.

In only two instances has an inter-American military force been established to serve in the Western Hemisphere.[2] The first occurred during the 1962 missile crisis, the only time the Pact has been invoked to repel an action by the Soviet Union—the Pact's ostensible target at its founding. The Organ of Consultation recommended to allied members that they "take all measures, individually and collectively, including the use of armed force." A combined quarantine force was established under a U.S. commander that included two Argentine destroyers and, more "symbolically," a Dominican gunboat, although the force, of course, was overwhelmingly composed of U.S. units.

The second occurred in 1965, when the Tenth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OAS dealt with the Dominican civil war. It authorized the establishment of a temporary Inter-American Peace-Keeping Force. The United States had landed troops in the Dominican Republic, and the force was an effort to transform that unilateral decision into a collective endeavor. The United States again provided the bulk of the forces and resources. However, this time the commander-in-chief was a Brazilian general, with a U.S. lieutenant general as second-in-command for the combined forces. At its peak the force contained only about two thousand Latin American troops, mostly Brazilians. Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Paraguay also participated in the force. Although Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela had been expected to contribute troops, domestic opposition prevented it. A Gallup poll asked 850 people in Buenos Aires whether Argentina should participate with its own armed forces in an inter-American military force established by the OAS; 54 percent said *no* and only 26 percent said *yes*. The U.S. Information Agency found strong opposition to sending troops to join the force in Buenos Aires, Caracas, Mexico, and Santiago. Only in Rio de Janeiro was there a plurality in favor. The OAS just barely approved the force after lengthy and divisive debate.[3]

The 1965 events may have impaired permanently the possibility of a collective inter-American military force, regardless of U.S. participation in it. The U.S. proposal in Spring 1979 that the OAS consider sending a peace force to Nicaragua to expedite a transition from a Somoza to a post-Somoza regime was strongly rejected by most OAS members. As Assistant Secretary of State Viron P. Vaky noted in testimony before Congress, "This reflected how deeply the American states were sensitized by the Dominican intervention of 1965, and how deeply they fear physical intervention."[4]

There are, however, some joint military exercises that have primarily political rather than military value. There is very little real military integration (the exercises often simply identify the military weaknesses of the Latin American participants). Since the early 1960s the United States and some South American navies—especially those of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile—have participated in Operation UNITAS. The United States has supported the annual joint Central

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American military exercise, CONDECA, which has, at best, a doubtful future in the 1980s. The ideological distance between Nicaragua and Guatemala, for example, would seem to preclude military cooperation between them. The United States and some Latin American countries also participate in the joint surveillance exercise HALCON VISTA.[5]

Of these, only UNITAS has some collective security value: Argentina and Brazil have aircraft carriers; Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru have cruisers. But in a serious war with a major power, all these ships would require escort vessels, as they are vulnerable to submarine attack. In fact, these forces can only barely protect the home waters; their offensive capabilities are limited to quick "hit-and-run" attacks.[6]

Another measure of the unwillingness and inability of these countries to bear collective security burdens is their military expenditures. In the late 1970s Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica, Barbados, Surinam, Panama, and Trinidad-Tobago spent less than 1 percent of their gross national product on military expenditures. Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela remained under 2 percent of GNP for military expenditures; Argentina was just above. Only Peru was somewhat above 5 percent.[7]

The countries of the Western Hemisphere have supported the United States politically in major crises with the Soviet Union. There was virtually unanimous condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (with only Cuba and Grenada opposed and Nicaragua abstaining). However, there are even limits to that support. Argentina did not join the U.S. grain embargo of the Soviet Union. This is not, however, Argentine greediness. A tacit understanding between the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Argentina has spared Argentina's military government from castigation by the communist countries and parties for human rights violations. The Argentine government has tamed the Argentine Communist party. And Argentina's military government has been less internationally isolated than Chile's. Argentina and Brazil will probably remain the Soviet Union's major Latin American trading partners after Cuba.

This lack of burden sharing is explained best by judgments about hemispheric security. Many Latin Americans believe that they would not be directly involved in a war between the United States and the Soviet Union; if they are engaged, it will be impossible for them to make a major contribution because they lack the resources. Moreover, they believe that the United States, to defend its own global position and to honor the Rio Pact, would defend them in the unlikely event of a Soviet conventional or strategic attack on them.

The U.S. government shares this perception. There is no expectation of a conventional attack on the region or that these countries can either defend themselves or participate in hemispheric defense against a modern outside force if attacked. There are no U.S. forces or bases in South America because they are neither needed nor wanted. U.S. forces and bases that may be used in the region are located in the United States; very limited forces are stationed in the Antilles, and their principal mission there is to monitor Soviet and Cuban activity and to contribute to the defense of the sea-lanes. It is only in the Caribbean that a modest case can be made for burden sharing.[8]

The Panama Canal Zone ceased to exist on October 1, 1979, when the Panama Canal treaties entered into force and most of the former Zone was turned

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

over to Panama. The United States will continue to operate the canal with Panamanian participation until 2000. The United States has retained the use of the land and facilities necessary for the defense of the canal until that time. The canal exemplifies how security is not a fixed commodity. The canal has always had, and retains, military and economic significance. It contributes to U.S. and world commerce. But modern warfare has reduced irreversibly the canal's importance to U.S. security. The canal's military value will be inconsequential in a strategic nuclear war as it will also be in a conventional war, for no U.S. aircraft carriers on active or foreseeable duty can transit the canal because they are too large. Because the United States has a multi-ocean navy, the main ship movements are between forward areas and home ports. There is ordinarily no major movement of fleets or task forces between oceans. There was never a need to move a vessel on an emergency basis during the Vietnam war, when the canal was of critical importance.[9]

The canal treaties do not impair, and may enhance, the defense of the canal. The treaties have no effect on the canal's vulnerability to strategic nuclear attack. Moreover, the key to the defense of the canal from an external conventional threat is the ability of the U.S. Navy to control the international waters around Panama, which has remained unaffected by the treaties. But the treaties may improve the canal's security in three ways. First, Panama's rising economic stake in the canal and its eventual take-over after 2000 commit it to prevent disruptions. The likelihood that a Panamanian government will support or even tolerate terrorist attacks has virtually vanished. Second, a neutral canal is less likely to come under attack than a canal operated by the United States. Third, an attack on a Panamanian owned-and-operated canal would complicate the aggressor's relations with Latin American and other Third World countries. While the latter two are marginal effects, they serve to enhance the canal's security.

The canal treaties have led to security burden sharing between the United States and Panama. Panama shares the burden because it was the precondition to ownership of the Zone and the canal. But, however reluctant Panama may have been to entangle itself with U.S. security, that it shares the burden is now a fact. Panama's increasing stake in the canal provides for the common defense that serves all of the canal's users, including the United States.

Apart from the U.S. forces that will remain in Panama to protect the canal until they are withdrawn in 2000, U.S. forces and bases remain in Puerto Rico and Guantanamo. Neither is a case of burden sharing: one is a U.S. possession, and the other exists over the loud opposition of the Cuban government. There are also small air force and navy facilities in the Bahamas and the Eastern Caribbean island chain for missile and satellite launches and for underwater surveillance. These are examples of burden sharing primarily between the United States and the United Kingdom. As the Bahamas and an increasing number of Eastern Caribbean ministates have become independent, or are about to, agreements governing these facilities need to be renegotiated, although none is of crucial military significance.

With the exception of Panama and the colonial inheritances of some English-speaking Caribbean islands, formal security burden sharing in the hemisphere is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

virtually nonexistent, because Latin American countries and the United States agree that there are no external threats that require it and no regional capability that could make a difference in the unlikely event of an attack. The United States consciously provides a security "free ride" to its southern neighbors, and the latter accept it, at least implicitly. This suggests also that the Rio Pact and associated agreements that formalize the free ride may have enduring value in unintended ways. Instead of providing for collective external defense, military burdens are, by world standards, kept low, releasing funds for other purposes. Again by world standards, the proliferation of modern weaponry has been modest, thus contributing indirectly to hemispheric arms control. Finally, there are some real security interests in the defense of the sea-lanes in the Caribbean, including the defense of the canal, but existing political agreements and military resources are adequate to the task.

The Soviet Union and Cuba

Soviet and Cuban activities that affect the security of the Caribbean and Central and South America are consistent with this judgment. Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Western Hemisphere are another example of how security is not a fixed but an evolving bargaining relationship. U.S.-USSR relations were governed for a long time by the presumption that the Soviet Union would be politically inactive in this hemisphere. Even trivial Soviet involvement, as in the case of Guatemala in the early 1950s, had elicited U.S. covert support for the successful overthrow of the Guatemalan government. The Cuban revolution changed that assumption. U.S.-USSR relations over Cuba, evolving since 1960, are governed by three understandings that limit Soviet operations in Cuba. No one security arrangement has been permanent. The only lasting feature has been the necessary renegotiation of the terms of these understandings.

The first and most important understanding dates from 1962. The Soviet Union withdrew its strategic weapons from Cuba in exchange for the expectation that the United States would not invade Cuba to overthrow its government. The second, in 1970, noted the U.S. expectation that the Soviet navy would not use Cuban ports as a base for strategic operations. The third, in 1979, included a Soviet promise not to introduce combat troops into Cuba in the future and the Soviet assertion that its present military personnel in Cuba had principally a training purpose.[10]

Soviet use of Cuban facilities in the Western Hemisphere has, in fact, been limited. Although the USSR has been making slow qualitative changes in the type of submarine calling at Cuban ports, as well as changes in ports of call, to test the limits of the 1970 understanding, no part of Cuba now serves as an operational base from which the Soviet Union could attack the United States. Soviet military personnel in Cuba are too few to pose a credible threat to the United States and, by and large, are neither organized nor equipped for that purpose.

From 1969 (when these began) to 1978, there were nineteen Soviet naval and naval air deployments to Cuba, eleven of which also entered the Gulf of Mexico. While the average of the first seventeen deployments had been thirty-eight

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

days, the two in 1978 lasted sixty-five and eighty-two days; there were eleven Soviet naval air deployments to Cuba in 1978 alone. The main purposes of these activities have been political. They demonstrate Soviet support for Cuba and Soviet interests in the region. They monitor U.S. responses to the Soviet presence. They demonstrate a Soviet ability to conduct naval operations in the American "Mediterranean."

There are also some modest military advantages gained by the USSR: the Soviet Union secures open-ocean training opportunities; Soviet and Cuban intelligence monitoring abilities are improved; and there have been marginal increases in the time on-station for diesel-powered submarines (some bearing strategic ballistic missiles) that have called on Cuban ports and in the reaction time of Soviet forces that can use Cuba.

U.S. air defenses were correspondingly limited, and in fact were reduced, in southern United States in the 1960s and 1970s, because the perception of threat from the south had declined. The small increases ordered by President Carter in 1979 serve also primarily for political purposes, although they counter slightly these Soviet military advantages. The president established a Caribbean Joint Task Force, with headquarters at Key West, to coordinate military maneuvers in the Caribbean and to monitor activities in and by Cuba. The president also expanded military maneuvers; soon thereafter U.S. forces conducted maneuvers in the Guantanamo base area. In all cases, however, the military significance of these Soviet and U.S. movements is quite modest.[11]

The weaponry that the Soviet Union has provided Cuba is also, by and large, unsuitable and insufficient to pose a credible threat to the United States. The Cuban navy is essentially a coastal defense force, notwithstanding the delivery in 1978 of a *Foxtrot* class conventionally powered attack submarine. The Cuban air force's principal mission appears to be to support ground forces. The arrival of Mig-23 Flogger F aircraft by 1978 is consistent with this interpretation. The Cuban war experience earlier that year in support of Ethiopia against Somalia confirmed the need to equip the Cuban armed forces with more up-to-date type of ground support aircraft. While some Cuban aircraft could attack southern Florida, the combat radius of the bulk of the Cuban air force is limited. Cuba has been phasing out its older medium-range bombers. The Cuban army, including a large, competent combat-ready military reserve, has been committed mostly to Africa. The Cuban armed forces are needed for the defense of the governments of Angola and Ethiopia and for the maintenance of Ethiopia's territorial integrity.[12]

The Soviet Union had also established diplomatic relations with many Latin American countries, including all the major ones (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela), by the mid-1970s. It developed close ties with Guyana and Jamaica. However, while political and trade relations between Latin American countries and the USSR clearly improved, the net impact of the Soviet Union on the region remained negligible and certainly far less than earlier dire forecasts. Although the USSR has become a major arms exporter in other parts of the world, the only Latin American country to have made substantial acquisitions of Soviet weaponry (other than Cuba) has been Peru.[13]

Other Cuban policies in the Western Hemisphere also show the evolution of security relations. Cuba supported insurrections to overthrow enemy govern-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ments when it was virtually isolated in the hemisphere in the 1960s. That was partly justified on ideological grounds—it is the duty of revolutionaries to make and support revolutions—but it was also a strategy of international security. For example, Cuba's long-standing support to anti-Somoza guerrillas in Nicaragua is explained in part by Somoza's support of the Bay of Pigs invasion and other efforts to overthrow Fidel Castro in the 1960s. By the 1970s Cuba broke out of its isolation. Collective inter-American sanctions, and some elements of U.S. bilateral sanctions against Cuba, have been removed, even if the U.S. trade embargo remains. Terrorist activities against the Cuban government have been better controlled by the United States. Cuba responded favorably to these changes. Both countries have delimited maritime jurisdictions and fishing rights, and they have a cooperative *modus vivendi* to control hijacking and drug traffic. The net result has been to improve Caribbean collective security. As it became conscious of the need to avoid provoking the United States militarily as one guarantee of the collective security of the Caribbean, Cuba emphasized government-to-government relations more. In May 1980, however, the Cuban air force in full daylight attacked a clearly marked large Bahamian coast guard vessel that had arrested two Cuban fishing boats in Bahamian waters, sinking it and killing four of its crew. On the following day the Cuban air force impeded Bahamian efforts to rescue the survivors. Instead of providing an unqualified apology for a mistake, Cuba accused the Bahamian boat of serving U.S. interests—without specifying how—indicating that Cuba reserved the right to repeat such military responses in the future. The military attack had been without precedent. Given the frequency of fishing violations in the Caribbean, the Cuban policy could be seriously destabilizing.[14] Cuba apologized only after the Bahamas threatened to charge Cuba with aggression before the U.N. Security Council.

Cuban overseas military forces have been posted primarily outside the Americas. There are no overseas front-line combat forces in the Western Hemisphere. Until 1979 there were no permanent Cuban military missions assisting governments in this hemisphere. The rise to power of revolutionary governments in the small island of Grenada and in Nicaragua in 1979 led to the crossing of another military threshold in the hemisphere. Cuba assisted in the training of their police and military forces for the first time ever. Along with the Bahamas incident and the slightly increased Soviet military activities in the Caribbean, these changes are cause for concern. Without being alarming, they do underline the need for U.S. policies to provide more options to Nicaragua and to other Central American and Caribbean countries.

President Fidel Castro has commented on the Nicaraguan situation. He told the Nicaraguan government to be prudent in its relations with the United States. It should "not be extremist, but realistic," and it should "go slow." He appealed to the United States to compete with Cuba in assisting Nicaragua, because that would serve the common objective of avoiding "another Vietnam." He has recognized that U.S. "imperialism has learned something, too" and, consequently, so should revolutionaries in their relations with the United States. As for the revolution in Grenada, it was unrelated to Cuba before it succeeded. And while Cuba has had a long relationship with the Sandinistas, the Nicaraguan revolution succeeded primarily for internal reasons. Cuban support was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only one factor, albeit an important one, along with support from Costa Rica, Panama, and Venezuela, in Somoza's fall in 1979. Relations between the United States and Cuba in the Caribbean have changed on the basis of a new and evolving mutual restraint. The United States has not landed its marines in Nicaragua, nor has Cuba. Even Cuba's increased aid to Nicaragua and Grenada has not sought to exclude the United States, while the United States has worked well with, and provided aid to, Nicaragua's revolutionary government. The ruling junta in Nicaragua continues to reflect a broad spectrum of political opinion; when two political moderates left the junta, two other moderates replaced them in May 1980. But the months ahead will reveal whether the United States and Nicaragua will continue to pursue moderate policies toward each other.

Cuba has also had aid programs with other countries in the Americas—Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, and, more modestly, Peru. Most of these countries initiated the request for Cuban support. Peru was an exception, because Cuban aid began as relief assistance after a major earthquake in the early 1970s. Notwithstanding Cuban aid, these countries have maintained great independence from many Cuban foreign policy views while sharing others; and relations between Cuba and Peru deteriorated sharply in early 1980 when thousands of Cubans took refuge in the Peruvian embassy in Havana. Only Grenada appears to have tailored its foreign policy very closely after Cuba's.[15] Cuba's development of Grenada's airport should, in due course, ease transportation problems between Cuba and its armies in Africa. It will be important to watch whether Grenada comes to serve wider Soviet or Cuban purposes—including as a base of naval operations.

Although their military capabilities have improved, neither Cuba nor the Soviet Union can injure the United States from bases in the Western Hemisphere. Cuban foreign policy was rather cautious in the 1970s in order not to threaten the slowly improving security relations with the United States in the Caribbean. It is too early to tell whether the May 1980 incident with the Bahamas opens a new phase. The military disputes between Cuba and the United States that worsened in the 1970s occurred in Africa and the Middle East, not in the Caribbean or Central America. The real fears, justifiably prevalent in the 1960s, of Cuban activities in the Americas have been reduced because Cuban subversive activities are fewer—limited primarily to El Salvador and Guatemala—and because the U.S. government has learned not to attribute the spread of revolutions (a contemporary feature of Central American life), in the absence of credible evidence, to Cuban subversion. The Soviet Union and Cuba, therefore, do not pose a conventional threat, and pose a declining unconventional threat, to the United States or other countries of the region. To the extent that a conventional threat is potential, the United States has sufficient force to meet it.

In recent years, however, Cuba has become not only a factor in the international politics of the Western Hemisphere, but also a major contender for political and military influence in Africa and elsewhere. It may be useful, therefore, to look briefly at this wider context of Cuban foreign policy to understand Cuba's opportunities and limitations in the politics of the Western Hemisphere.

Since the Cuban revolutionary government came to power in January 1959, its leadership has pursued global foreign policies. Globalism responded to twin

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

needs of the Cuban government. U.S. policies toward Cuba sought to enlist worldwide support to isolate the Cuban government; thus, the survival of that government required a global response to a global challenge. Equally important was the evolution of an ideology, a way to see the world, that led Cuba to become increasingly involved in affairs beyond its shores to advance its own interests and its revolutionary vision of the world. In the 1960s, when few noncommunist governments were willing to have normal diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba, Cuban foreign policy toward much of Latin America and Africa emphasized support for insurgents who sought to overthrow established governments. Partly because these efforts failed, and partly because a rising number of governments came gradually to establish relations with Cuba, the character of Cuban foreign policy looked rather different in the 1970s. Government-to-government relations came to predominate.

As the Cuban economy recovered in the early 1970s from its virtual collapse twice in the 1960s, and as the Cuban armed forces became increasingly professionalized so that they could engage in serious combat, the country was ready for the next stage in the evolution of its foreign policy. The changing international climate also played an important role. The United States appeared far less willing to become involved in overseas wars in distant places where the links to the security of the United States were unclear. Moreover, the specific circumstances of the two most important instances of Cuban military intervention overseas helped also to protect Cuba from retaliation by the United States. In Angola, Cuba could claim that it was protecting a black African country from a South African invasion, consistent with the preferences of most African countries. Support for South Africa in its incursion deep into Angola would have been very costly politically for the United States. In the Horn of Africa, Cuba came to the aid of Ethiopia to defeat an overt and massive invasion by Somalia. Cuban defense of Ethiopia's territorial integrity turned out to advance its own interests, while at the same time it was consistent with the policies of the Organization of African Unity and even with U.S. policies.

Cuba's overseas military commitments, relative to its population, are higher than those of the United States at the peak of the Vietnam war. Cuba has begun to incur some of the international and internal costs that come from such massive overseas activities. By sending its best personnel overseas, Cuba deprives its domestic society and economy of their services, with a consequent decline in production, productivity, and general efficiency. By early 1979, in the wake of two major overseas wars and a continuing large overseas presence, these "opportunity costs" began to be felt as the Cuban economy—disturbed, too, by the spread of plagues that injured the tobacco and sugar crops—nosedived. Cuba's current economic recession is the third worst in the history of revolutionary rule. That, in turn, has set the stage for substantial political discontent, reflected in part in the exile of over a hundred thousand Cubans in the first half of 1980.

Internationally, Cuba's close alliance with the Soviet Union has been, of course, essential for the conduct and implementation of Cuban policies. The revolutionary government in Cuba could not have survived the crises of the past two decades without Soviet support, nor could it have implemented its foreign military policies without Soviet assistance. The Soviet Union gives massive aid

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the Cuban economy and provides weaponry to Cuba free of charge. The relationship between the two countries overseas, however, is best thought of as a tight alliance. It is not a simple case of a puppet responding to its master's will. The available evidence suggests that Cuba, for example, may have taken the lead in persuading the Soviet Union to participate in the civil war in Angola in 1975 on the side of the eventual victors, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). And while the Soviet stakes were certainly much higher in the case of the war in the Horn of Africa in 1978, Cuba, too, had become interested on its own in the affairs of that subregion.

More recently, however, Soviet policy has added to Cuban foreign policy problems. In 1979 Fidel Castro became the chairman of the so-called Non-Aligned Movement. He sought to persuade many of the movement's members that there was a natural alliance between them and the Soviet Union. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan changed all that. Cuba has not been able to exercise the influence that it had hoped to have with the movement, nor, because of this, was it able to obtain the U.N. Security Council seat that it coveted. Cuba's successor as chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, Iraq, has taken the lead in condemning Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

Cuba remains willing and able to use its military might overseas and especially in Africa. But the recent complications it has found in international relations, and in its internal affairs, make it less likely that it would undertake large new international initiatives in Africa or in the Americas. The leadership will, however, probably try to persevere in the fulfillment of its overseas commitments, notwithstanding the problems that have emerged. And if Cuba does undertake new military commitments, these may be more likely in Africa where Cuban troops are already present and engaged. Thus it is less likely that Cuba would become massively and militarily engaged in the Western Hemisphere precisely because of the press of its commitments in Africa and at home, and because the dangers of retaliation are so much greater from the United States if Cuba were to take military action in the Americas. This judgment, then, is not very reassuring about international stability in Africa, but it provides somewhat greater assurance, albeit unintended, about the future evolution of relations between the United States, Cuba, and other Latin American countries. These are likely to be marked by much political competition but not by war.[16]

The United States must continue to resist the temptation to exaggerate or overdramatize the admittedly real, but modest, advances made by the Soviet Union and Cuba in Central America and the Caribbean, most of which occurred independently of Cuban and Soviet actions and none of which threatens the United States. This subregion has seen U.S. interventions in the past—as in the Dominican Republic in 1965—when the United States, without sufficient justification, projected its global fears of the Soviet Union and China into its own geographic background. In the 1980s the United States should continue both to avoid such unwarranted linkages and to reject the use of the Caribbean as a staging area merely to demonstrate general U.S. strength or resolve.

Latin American National Security

Other security dimensions arise from conceptions of national security held in Latin American countries. Because their governments do not expect either to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have to defend themselves, or be able to do so, from a strategic or conventional major power attack, they have not developed military establishments for that purpose. Instead, their armed forces respond to possible conventional warfare with neighboring countries and to internal subversion. The existence of serious political conflicts among Latin American countries, in turn, makes it more difficult for their governments to think of each other as allies or to be willing to bear collective security burdens with a Latin American neighbor that is perceived as a security threat.

From the time of the independence of most Latin American countries early in the nineteenth century, there have been many serious conflicts, and several wars, among them. However, there has not been a war in South America since Peru defeated Ecuador in 1941, notwithstanding many continuing conflicts. There is no assurance that prevailing antagonisms will remain peaceful indefinitely, but the record of conflict resolution is striking. I have identified elsewhere over two dozen border or territorial disputes in South America since 1960. Most have been settled in some way when the stronger state yields to the weaker state on territory in exchange for a larger package of other concessions from the weaker state, such as political influence and trade and investment contracts. This "hegemonial yielding" denotes diplomatic calculation and an ability to redefine stakes from narrow territorial issues to more complex packages where all can gain. However, because war is "unthinkable" in South America, troops have been mobilized quite often as a conflict ritual to press adversaries. But a cushion that reduces further the likelihood of war is the substantial control and discipline exercised by military commands at the border.[17]

The military posture of the major South American states is consistent with this argument. They modernized weapons inventories in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, their real combat readiness remains low, and their ability to sustain a war effort remains quite modest. They have very limited offensive capabilities for interstate warfare; much of their newly gained military mobility serves internal security needs better. The average percent change per year of their military expenditures, never high by world standards, slowed down from 1968-73 to 1973-78, when South America ranked at the bottom of the world's regions on this indicator. This force posture facilitates conflict ritual but not war itself.[18]

The major South American states also sought to diversify their sources of weaponry and other military materials at about the same time that the United States unilaterally implemented an arms control policy in the region to prevent transfers of weapons that might be used for offensive interstate warfare. However laudable U.S. intentions, the policy simply made it easier for others to supply these weapons. From 1967 to 1976 the U.S. share of the value of arms transfers to Latin America fell to one third; it declined to one fifth among Latin America's major purchasers, or among estimated orders.

While the United States may have lost some opportunities for exercising political leverage, it is not at all clear that U.S. arms transfers programs have been unambiguously beneficial for U.S. policies in the past, nor that the diversification of Latin American arms suppliers has much affected the foreign policies of these countries. While Peruvian acquisitions of Soviet weapons coincided with the deterioration of relations between the United States and Peru in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the causes of that problem had little to do with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet influence, and are best explained by economic disputes between the United States and Peru. The only area where U.S. arms transfers may have been an important factor for political influence, as noted below, is Central America. A casualty of the diversification of suppliers is, of course, any hoped-for arms standardization within the alliance. An elusive policy at best in the past, arms standardization has always been a source of political conflict and mistrust. It is now dead.[19]

No Latin American country has developed nuclear weapons and appropriate delivery systems or stated an intention to do so. There have been persisting efforts within Latin America to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, principally through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which seeks to establish a nuclear weapons-free region. Only two Latin American countries, Argentina and Brazil, are likely to have the capabilities to develop such weapons if they chose to do so. While they have not fully adhered to pertinent international treaties, there is at present no determined policy to develop nuclear weapons and delivery systems for them. Their programs have emphasized nuclear energy development, with Argentina in the lead. Their long-standing dispute over the use of La Plata river system waters for hydroelectric development was resolved in 1979. That outcome—reached in time-honored fashion, with the stronger country, Brazil, yielding—may reduce political tensions while making it easier to develop non-nuclear energy resources.[20]

In Central America the situation is far more troublesome. The most recent war occurred between Honduras and El Salvador in 1969; relations between the two countries have remained fragile. In this region, war is thinkable. The stronger countries are more likely to initiate conflicts and to win. Conflicts in Central America—unlike in South America—are often related to internal political or other weaknesses. Shooting accidents at the border occur more often because military command control is weaker. Two factors have attenuated conflict in Central America in the past. One has been the willingness and ability of the United States to help maintain the shaky peace. The other has been the constructive role played by the Organization of American States. Conflict has long been a part of Central American history, but it is compounded by the greater ideological heterogeneity that was evident as the 1980s opened, and by the erosion of U.S. influence. Central America in the late 1970s ranked at the bottom of the world's regions in weapons imports; however, small amounts can go a long way in these countries. Their average percent change per year in military expenditures doubled from the periods 1968-73 to 1973-78.[21]

It is not inconceivable, however, that conflicts arising from Central America's newly found ideological heterogeneity could be contained. The major external actors in the region—the United States and Cuba—have common security interests in avoiding interstate war between their clients. The United States eschewed military intervention most dramatically in Nicaragua in 1978-79, and Cuba is already heavily committed militarily in Africa and has economic and political troubles at home. Both generally support the preservation of borders and of territorial integrity. Neither is at present actively trying to subvert each other's regional clients, although Cuban support for insurgents in El Salvador and Guatemala has been rising.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Latin American definitions of national security, however, have moved beyond the usual interstate concerns. In the 1960s the armed forces began to perceive severe threats from internal insurrection and external subversion. Training and equipment-acquisitions programs were initiated to meet these perceived threats, with the United States providing considerable assistance. These policies succeeded too well. The need to combat such threats was at times turned into a general fear of social change. National security became not just an issue but an ideology to justify authoritarian rule. Although U.S. policies should not be held responsible for the rise of all of these Leviathans (indeed, they may have moderated some excesses), they contributed to the development of an international ideological policy milieu that facilitated the emergence of repressive regimes in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, and that confirmed the authoritarian proclivities of petty tyrannies in the northern Central American countries, Haiti, and Paraguay.[22]

Except for the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959, no other Latin American regime became a Soviet or Cuban ally from 1945 to 1979. That outcome was certainly surprising, given the expected security threats to the region from all quarters in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[23] The United States intervened overtly in the Dominican Republic in 1965 to prevent a "second Cuba" (that is, the emergence of a communist regime allied with the USSR), although the real threat of that was unlikely; and covertly to the same end in Guatemala (1954), in Cuba (1961), and in Chile at various times.[24] The success of two revolutionary movements in 1979 in Grenada and Nicaragua has reopened this question. U.S. policy has been more receptive to working with the revolutionary government in Nicaragua than the historical record would suggest. This government has been more moderate than its Cuban counterpart in the early 1960s, at home and in foreign policy. In 1979-80, for example, the Nicaraguan government disagreed with the Soviet Union and Cuba on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and on the Kampuchean civil war. The United States, by and large, has ignored Grenada, except indirectly, by trying to improve U.S. relations and increase economic aid programs to other Caribbean countries. It is possible, then, that in the 1980s the United States might be more able to coexist with these new revolutionary governments in the Caribbean and Central America than it has been since the 1940s, and that these regimes—especially Nicaragua—will pursue a more independent foreign policy than Cuba or Somoza's Nicaragua.[25]

The United States as a Threat to Latin America?

In 1963, during the most active years of the Alliance for Progress, a poll showed that 73 percent of residents sampled in Mexico City and 70 percent of those sampled in Caracas indicated that they had good opinions of the United States. Residents of these cities were consistently more favorably disposed toward the United States in the 1960s than residents of Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, or Santiago.[26] Almost a decade later those proportions had fallen to 54 and 64 percent, in Mexico City and Caracas. Elites in both Mexico City and Caracas were even less likely to have a good opinion of the United States. Dur-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the same period of time, less than half of Caracas residents sampled thought that the basic interests of Venezuela were in agreement with those of the United States. That was less agreement than for twelve out of thirteen other countries sampled throughout the world at that time: people in Nairobi, Beirut, Manila, or Kuala Lumpur, for example, thought that their countries' interests were closer to those of the United States.

To focus more clearly on Caracas, whose citizens in the early 1970s still had a good opinion of the United States, 42 percent of its general public thought the United States posed an economic or military threat to Venezuela, but only 37 percent feared the same from the Soviet Union. Most of the fear about U.S. aggression focused on economic issues, whereas in the case of the USSR, it was fear of military aggression. Data on university-educated residents are even more striking: 60 percent feared U.S. aggression, while only 35 percent feared Soviet aggression. The elites, too, were more likely to fear economic aggression from the United States and military aggression from the USSR, but 24 percent of the elites feared U.S. military aggression, while only 21 percent feared Soviet military aggression. Only Canadian elites (out of fourteen countries surveyed) feared U.S. aggression more, almost entirely on economic grounds, and only Japanese elites feared U.S. military aggression as much.[27]

On the U.S. side, a survey conducted in 1978 by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations asked questions about eleven hypothetical international crises. The mass public was more likely to favor committing troops in the only Latin American case included in the list (Panama closing the canal) than in any other conceivable scenario. Elites interviewed were more likely to favor committing troops in the cases of Soviet invasions of Western Europe (including West Berlin) and Japan, but sending U.S. troops to Panama still outranked invasions of South Korea, Israel, Taiwan, or Yugoslavia. Although the Panama Canal was an emotional issue when this survey was taken, these data and the long record of U.S. interventions in Middle America provide some bases for a Latin American perception that the United States is the "enemy."[28]

The argument has come full circle. Not only is burden sharing limited, and the use of the term "alliance" somewhat metaphorical, but according to a substantial share of Latin American elite and mass publics, the country to be contained is the United States. Policies of Latin American governments have been increasingly consistent with this view. Some have already been mentioned, such as the diversification of arms suppliers away from the United States. Latin American countries have sought to increase their economic security in their relations with the industrialized world, and especially with the United States. They are active members of the so-called U.N. Group of 77, the caucus of less developed countries within its Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). They have formed the Latin American Economic System, known by its Spanish initials SELA, that includes Cuba but excludes the United States. Venezuela was the key founder of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Mexico led in efforts to formulate the key United Nations documents on the so-called New International Economic Order. Ecuador, Peru, and Chile led a long and eventually successful struggle to obtain recognition of their 200-mile maritime jurisdiction zones, often over the bitter opposition of the United States that at times included the imposition of economic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sanctions and limited cases of violence between U.S. fishermen and these countries' navies. Latin American governments have partly redesigned inter-American agreements to include notions of collective economic security, most of which are aimed at delegitimizing past actions of the United States.[29]

This focus on economic issues builds on the Latin American perception that the more traditional security interests in the hemisphere do not warrant comparably high attention. The Soviet Union has never become a credible threat to them. Although, as the 1980s opened, Cuban relations with Venezuela and Peru had deteriorated considerably, the latter two no longer feared Cuban aggression. Venezuela was very concerned about Cuban policies in the Antilles and Central America, however, and its government was consciously positioning itself as Cuba's rival for influence in the subregion. Still, Cuba is perceived to be much less threatening than it was in the 1960s, and Cuban relations with some of its neighbors, such as Mexico, continue to improve. While interstate war is a concern, especially in Central America, economic security affects daily affairs far more. The armed forces of major Latin American countries now include economic considerations in their notions of national security. Thus state enterprises have spread in major economic sectors throughout the region regardless of ideology: from Chile to Venezuela, from Brazil to Peru, the commanding heights of the economy are in the hands of the state, with enterprises often directed by retired or active military officers.[30] As the United States established a regional *modus vivendi* with the Soviet Union and Cuba and returned the Chamizal territory to Mexico in the 1960s, the cays of Roncador, Quitasueño, and Serrana to Colombia in the early 1970s, and the Canal Zone to Panama in the late 1970s, military and territorial issues have declined in importance in U.S. policies toward the hemisphere, permitting this new primacy of economic issues.

The major Latin American countries have restructured their economies. They increasingly export manufactured products, at times provoking conflicts with the United States. They are growing as bases of multinational enterprises. Argentina and Brazil are exporting weaponry. Brazil and Mexico are more active and engaged in private capital markets than most other Third World countries. Mexico and the Caribbean basin are also the major sources of migration to the United States, legal and illegal, and are likely to remain so for the balance of the century. Latin American countries, especially the larger ones, are becoming essential international actors; their interests must be taken into account if a world order compatible with U.S. interests and values is to be maintained.[31]

The stakes of the United States in the hemisphere have been transformed. It is not that economic and social issues have appeared for the first time. Strategic raw materials have long been of concern for U.S. policy toward the hemisphere; petroleum security concerns have shaped relations between the United States and Venezuela for many years. Three other things, however, are new.

The first is the evolution or resolution of many U.S. military and territorial concerns so that they no longer matter as much as they once did. U.S. economic security policies have also been marked by learning and moderation. Cuba's uncompensated takeover of U.S. firms in 1960 was a prelude to overt and covert acts of war that failed. Peru's uncompensated seizure of U.S. firms late in that decade led to very troubled relations but no acts of war, and eventually to mu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tually satisfactory settlements. In 1965 the United States sent troops to the Dominican Republic when just the sniff of Marxism-Leninism was in the air. Relations between the United States and the Nicaraguan revolutionary government have so far been strikingly different. The internal consensus that supported the Venezuelan government's decision to nationalize its petroleum industry in the mid-1970s, while maintaining good relations with the United States, contrasts sharply with the internal and international divisiveness of much more modest nationalizations by the Brazilian government in the early 1960s.

A second change is the new clout of several of these major Latin American states. Some have entered the international economic arena as new industrial countries. The structure of their trade has changed. The structure of foreign investment, especially in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela, has moved sharply away from nonmanufacturing toward manufacturing sectors.[32] They are also active in international politics beyond the hemisphere. Within the hemisphere, Brazil plays a newly influential role with its smaller neighbors, as does Venezuela in the Caribbean and Mexico in Central America. Andean Pact countries have acted in concert outside their subregion, coordinating policies toward Nicaragua, for example.

The third change is the challenge posed by Latin American economies and societies to the weaker components within the United States. Many of their new exports compete with declining U.S. industries. Many migrants from these countries threaten the jobs of the least skilled and most poorly organized U.S. citizens, themselves often of Mexican or Caribbean-basin descent.

Security policies of the United States toward Latin America suffer from the paradox of successful relations. Much has been accomplished. To the surprise of many, these countries to the south have not come under Soviet or Cuban domination. To the regret of many, myself included, this has often been accomplished through the establishment of authoritarian Leviathans. Many specific disputes have also been resolved (Panama Canal, Chamizal, and other territorial questions) or contained successfully (relations between the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba). The success of these policies has made it possible to focus more on issues with much higher economic content that have led to new conflicts. Even some old economic questions have been resolved. The United States and Latin America are much less likely to fight in the future about the expropriation of natural resource firms and utilities because so many of these have been nationalized already!

The paradox of success has another feature. Many U.S. policies, ranging from the Rio Pact to economic assistance, had sought to strengthen Latin American states. That has occurred, although the U.S. impact on this positive outcome was only marginal. The newly strengthened Latin American states have redefined their own security concerns and have come to challenge the United States in important ways. But they have also cast their lot more firmly with an international order, compatible with U.S. interests, through deepening their international links in trade, investment, and capital markets. The spread of these links toward Europe and Japan reduces the concentration of conflict that had characterized the older relationship between the United States and Latin America.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S. security interests in the hemisphere require the incorporation of its southern neighbors in an evolving relationship (including the United States, Western Europe, the older British Commonwealth—Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—Japan, and the newly industrial East Asian countries) based on these newer, deeper, and wider ties that are threatened more by some internal U.S. policies (trade protectionism, tougher immigration policies, "consumer hawkishness" toward Venezuelan or Mexican petroleum) than by Cuba, the Soviet Union, or other traditional adversaries.

The United States and Latin America are not enemies, and perceptions to that effect are gross exaggerations. But their interests are not simply harmonious or easily reconciled. Given these transformations of stakes, the success of many past policies, and the passing of old conflicts, new threats to U.S. security interests in this hemisphere are often posed by factors arising out of internal policies in the United States and Latin American countries. There are still some traditional security concerns, but resources available are adequate for the task of dealing with their declining relative importance. The future security of the hemisphere will depend increasingly on a reconstitution of an internal U.S. policy consistent with its own liberal social and economic values and on a reshaping of Latin American policies, especially in the larger countries, to make them consistent with the collective political and economic security of allied Western European, North American, and western Pacific Ocean countries.

Security conceived as a bargaining relationship has been radically altered from 1945 to 1980 in this hemisphere. It has moved from military-territorial to economic issues, from extrahemispheric threats to intra- and multihemispheric concerns, and from an identifiable enemy abroad to a more generalized and less focused conflict. Only further attention to this different agenda, with many more and more complex conflicts, will lead to a new bargaining relationship between the United States and Latin America that could evolve toward success again in the 1980s.

REFERENCES

I am grateful to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and to the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, for supporting this research. An earlier version of this paper was presented at a meeting of the American Academy in Washington, D.C., April 17-19, 1980.

[1]For a general discussion, see J. Lloyd Mecham, *The United States and Inter-American Security, 1889-1960* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961), pp. 278-317.

[2]During the Second World War, the Brazilian army and navy, the Chilean navy, and the Mexican air force fought on the U.N. side. Colombia contributed two destroyers and ground troops in the Korean war. Latin American countries have also participated in U.N. peace-keeping missions.

[3]U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Special Subcommittee on National Defense Posture, "Review of U.S. Military Commitments Abroad: Phase III—Rio and ANZUS Pacts," *Report*, 90th Congress, 2d. session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 5; Jerome Slater, "The Limits of Legitimization in International Organizations: The Organization of American States and the Dominican Crisis," *International Organization*, 22 (1) (Winter 1969): 48-72; *Polls* 2 (3) (Spring 1967): 28; U.S. Information Agency, Research and Reference Service, "Latin American Attitudes toward the U.S. in the Wake of the Dominican Crisis," R-179-65, December 1965, p. 9.

[4]Viron P. Vaky, "Statement before the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives," June 26, 1979, p. 11.

[5]U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Military Posture for FY1978*, January 20, 1977, p. 56.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[6]Kenneth Nolde, "Arms in South America: An Alternative View," paper presented at the National Meeting, Latin American Studies Association, Pittsburgh, April 5-8, 1979, p. 66.

[7]U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1967-1976* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), pp. 4, 58.

[8]There has also been some "unconventional" burden sharing. The United States and Honduras assisted the forces that overthrew President Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954, and the United States, Guatemala, and Nicaragua trained and supported the Cuban exile brigade defeated at the Bay of Pigs in 1961. There has been at times a Latin American willingness to supply intelligence to U.S. agencies.

[9]U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, "Panama Canal Treaties," *Report*, 95th Congress, 1st session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), pp. 75-89.

[10]For a discussion, see Jorge I. Domínguez, "The Armed Forces and Foreign Relations," in *Cuba in the World*, Cole Blasier and Carmelo Mesa-Lago (eds.) (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), pp. 73-75.

[11]Ibid.; U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, "Impact of Cuban-Soviet Ties in the Western Hemisphere, Spring 1979," *Hearings*, 96th Congress, 1st session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), p. 8; U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, "President Carter: Soviet Troops in Cuba," *Current Policy*, 92 (Washington, D.C.: October 1, 1979): 3.

[12]Domínguez, "The Armed Forces and Foreign Relations," pp. 54-58; House of Representatives, "Impact of Cuban-Soviet Ties in the Western Hemisphere," pp. 4-9, 16, 21-25.

[13]G. Pope Atkins, *Latin America in the International Political System* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 186-7; Norman M. Smith, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Latin America," Paper presented to the U.S. Army War College Military Policy Symposium, January 20, 1977.

[14]For further discussion, see Jorge I. Domínguez, "Cuban Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 57 (1) (Fall 1978): 83-108.

[15]*Verde Olivo* 20 (31) (August 5, 1979): 7-12; Ronald E. Jones, "Cuba and the English-speaking Caribbean," in *Cuba in the World*, Blasier and Mesa-Lago; Jorge I. Domínguez, "Political and Military Limitations and Consequences of Cuban Policies in Africa," *Cuban Studies* (forthcoming).

[16]For further discussion, see Domínguez, "Cuban Foreign Policy"; Domínguez, "Political and Military Limitations and Consequences of Cuban Policies in Africa"; Blasier and Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the World;* and *Revolutionary Cuba in the World Arena*, Martin Weinstein (ed.) (Philadelphia: ISHI Press, 1979).

[17]Jorge I. Domínguez, "Ghosts from the Past: Territorial and Boundary Disputes in Mainland Central and South America since 1960" (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1980).

[18]Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *Armaments or Disarmament?: The Crucial Choice* (Stockholm: 1979), p. 7; Nolde, "Arms in South America," pp. 62-66.

[19]David Ronfeldt and Caesar Sereseres, "U.S. Arms Transfers, Diplomacy and Security in Latin America and Beyond," P-6005 (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, October 1977); and Smith, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Latin America"; Mecham, *The United States and Inter-American Security*, pp. 298-300.

[20]John R. Redick, "Regional Restraint: U.S. Nuclear Policy and Latin America," *Orbis*, 1 (22) (Spring 1978): 161-200; and Domínguez, "Ghosts from the Past."

[21]Domínguez, "Ghosts from the Past"; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *Armaments or Disarmament*, pp. 7, 11.

[22]For an elaboration, see Robert A. Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World: Political Development Ideas in Foreign Aid and Social Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

[23]For discussions of these themes that reflect the concerns of the 1960s, see Mecham, *The United States and Inter-American Security; Latin America: Reform or Revolution*, James Petras and Maurice Zeitlin (eds.) (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett, 1968); Richard Gott, *Guerrilla Movements in Latin America* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972).

[24]See Cole Blasier, *The Hovering Giant: U.S. Responses to Revolutionary Change in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976).

[25]William M. LeoGrande: "The Revolution in Nicaragua: Another Cuba?" *Foreign Affairs*, 58 (1) (Fall 1979): 28-50; Domínguez, "Political and Military Limitations."

[26]U.S. Information Agency, Research and Reference Survey, "Some Indications of Worldwide Public Opinion toward the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.," R-141-63 (R) (July 1963), pp. 1, 3; U.S. Information Agency, Office of Research, "U.S. Standing in Mexico City between the President's China and U.S.S.R. Visits," R-47-72 (October 3, 1972), p. 3; U.S. Information Agency, Office of Research, "U.S. Standing in Foreign Public Opinion following the President's Visit to China," R-27-72 (May 16, 1972), p. 8; U.S. Information Agency, Office of Research, "U.S. Standing in Caracas, Venezuela, following the President's Visit to China," R-35-72 (August 25, 1972), p. 2.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[27]U.S. Information Agency, Office of Research and Assessment, "Foreign Images of External Threat and Expectations of U.S. Defense Assistance," R-51-72 (October 25, 1972), pp. 3-4, 21-22.

[28]*American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1979*, John E. Rielly (ed.) (Chicago: Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1979), p. 26.

[29]For discussions of some of these issues, see Robert Bond, "Regionalism in Latin America: Prospects for the Latin American Economic System," *International Organization*, 32 (2) (Spring 1978): 401-23; G. Pope Atkins, "Mutual Security and the Changing Inter-American System: An Appraisal of OAS Charter and Rio Treaty Revisions," Paper presented at the U.S. Army War College Military Policy Symposium, January 20, 1977; Edward Gonzalez, "United States Policy and Policy-Making in the 200-Mile Fisheries Dispute with Ecuador and Peru," in *Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, Appendix I* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976).

[30]For elaboration, Alfred Stepan, *The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 117-57.

[31]For discussions of some of these issues, see Albert Fishlow, "The Mature Neighbor Policy: A New United States Economic Policy for Latin America," *Policy Papers in International Affairs*, no. 3 (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1977); Edward S. Milenky, "Arms Production and National Security in Argentina," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., September 1979; John Odell, "Latin American Industrial Exports and Trade Negotiations with the United States" (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1979); Virginia R. Domínguez, *From Neighbor to Stranger: The Dilemma of Caribbean Peoples in the United States*, Occasional Paper no. 5 (New Haven: Antilles Research Program, Yale University, 1975).

[32]See Jorge I. Domínguez, "National and Multinational Business and the State in Latin America" (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1979).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COLIN S. GRAY

Strategic Stability Reconsidered

IN AN IMPORTANT ARTICLE published in 1978, John Steinbruner claimed: "As the United States force posture has evolved over the past 15 years, the idea of stability has emerged as the central strategic objective, and the asserted conceptual consensus seems to be organized around that objective."[1] This essay will focus on whether the theories of stability most widely held in the West may not be gravely deficient and whether the integrity of the concept of strategic stability may not itself be questionable.

Discussion of stability and its possible requirements is in fact a discussion of deterrence theory, which in reality is a debate about the operational merits of different postures and doctrines. No useful, objective, doctrine-neutral exploration of the idea of stability is possible. The discussion that follows makes no pretense of neutrality; instead, it endeavors, first, to explain the roots, meaning, and deficiencies of the still dominant theories of stability and, second, to suggest a theory that has much greater internal and external integrity.

It is important to recognize that, for all its popularity, there is no useful consensus about the meaning of stability. Most commentators, and certainly the government of the United States (and NATO), acknowledge the value in the twin concepts of arms race stability and crisis stability. As arms race stability is commonly understood, it is the condition wherein neither party to an arms competition will press military developments or deployments in quest of major advantage, because such advantage is judged to be unattainable, however desirable. Crisis stability is a quality of strategic relations: during periods of acute crisis, instruments of war (mechanical, electronic, organizational) should not be the immediate cause of war. At this level of generality, these concepts have been widely understood and approved (in the West) since at least 1960.[2] Consensus breaks down, however, over the particular policy implications. From an operational perspective, how is arms race stability to be achieved and maintained, and how is crisis stability enforced, vis à vis a Soviet adversary?

This quest seeks a theory of stability that will work "well enough," given the full dimensions of Western strategic security problems in the context of the military consequences of the unique "cultural thoughtways"[3] of a particular major adversary. As a working hypothesis, I believe that the ideas of arms race and crisis stability, and the theory of deterrence to which they usually make (often implicit) reference, have (mis)led Western policymakers into neglecting the operational dimensions of strategy. Indeed, many politicians, officials, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

analysts seem to believe that nuclear strategy cannot really have any operational dimensions. As its first priority, an adequate theory of deterrence must determine the military (and relevant civilian) requirements of war itself. Deterrence theory, the leitmotiv of Western strategic preparation, is fully consistent with a strategic force posture that has no credibility as a threat, because it would not be intelligently usable in practice. It is essential to recognize that both Western ideas of stability and the Soviet approach to the determination of principles that will guide their defense preparation and war planning have deep cultural roots—they are not accidents of history.

For much of this essay, "stable deterrence theory" will refer to the proposition that stability in arms competition and in time of crisis is maximized when each side is unambiguously vulnerable at home, and also confident that a large number of its strategic offensive weapons are invulnerable prior to launch and during mission execution.[4] This condition of mutual assured vulnerability has been identified for many years as a mutual assured destruction (MAD) posture. Orthodox stability theory in the West even today is based in good part on the assumption that mutual societal vulnerability is desirable. It must be observed, however, that a MAD posture, in principle, is compatible with a wide variety of strategic targeting plans.

By way of providing an initial point of doctrinal reference for this essay, it is my belief that the strategic balance would be stable if Western governments were allowed to enjoy not-implausible prospects of both defeating their enemy (on his own terms) and ensuring Western political-social survival and recovery. This admittedly close parallel to the known Soviet approach to defense planning is already U.S. policy with respect to the requirement for the defeat of the enemy,[5] and is not incompatible with the more familiar connotation of (arms race and crisis) stability. It rests on the proposition that forces that do not lend themselves to politically intelligent employment in war are probably insufficient to deter—at least at those rare times when an adversary may seek a military solution to his problems.[6] The costs of major war today are anticipated to be so high, and so many of the weapon systems on both sides lack realistic field tests,[7] that the call for a war-survival capability would hardly be likely to encourage Western governments down the path of military adventure.

In this essay I will argue that the West requires a concept of stability appropriate for giving a theoretical underpinning to the determination of the military requirements that will enable it to defend its vital interests. The stability theory dominant in the 1960s and 1970s was addressed at root to a relationship between two supposedly like-minded and ultimately (after détente had done its work) like-intending adversary-partners. Although a sea-change is evident in this new decade in official U.S. (and NATO) appreciation of Soviet habits and motives, the burden of obsolescent strategic theories of stability remains.

Concepts and Culture

There is much to recommend the working hypothesis that Soviet and American strategic concepts reflect the character and content of their divergent and distinctive "strategic cultures." Jack Snyder has defined strategic culture "as the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to nuclear strategy."[8] The insertion of "nuclear" precludes too much. John Erickson wrote recently on Soviet "style," stressing the pervasiveness of all arms thinking in Soviet military preparation.[9] Recognition, if not uncritical acceptance, of this working hypothesis is important for the following reasons. First, it might help to explain how and why the concept of strategic stability took such firm root in the U.S. defense and arms control community. Second, it should facilitate more accurate comprehension of Soviet deeds and words. Third, it should help U.S. policymakers to identify programs and doctrines that, while broadly compatible with American values, are adequately responsive to Soviet developments.

The United States

The concept of strategic stability took firm hold as an American strategic desideratum long before it was substantially field tested in the Soviet-American military competition or before there was a directly relevant formal arms control process. American theoreticians reasoned that the multitier arms competition between East and West could be stabilized through cooperative management effected through tacit agreement or formal bargaining. Moreover, the literature of the early and mid-1960s shows clearly that the U.S. defense community knew what strategic stability was and how it could best be forwarded. A gifted Israeli commentator on the U.S. arms debate wrote in 1964 that

> stability has become a fundamental concept in nuclear strategy, and a magic formula. Strategic situations are measured by the degree of their stability. . . . Once a situation of stability has been achieved, the initiation of war by surprise no longer assures any gain or advantage. A situation is stable, therefore, when there is no temptation to force the issue; it is a situation of mutual neutralization in which both the householder and the burglar know that even if one slays the other, the latter will manage to retaliate posthumously.[10]

The U.S. defense community, with very few exceptions, decided that a stable military balance would mean a safer world with fewer resources expended on defense than would be the case with an unstable military balance; should be compatible with the support of U.S. foreign policy interests (though it is unclear whether very careful analysis was performed on this subject); and should *eventually* find favor with the Soviet Union, because of its technological inevitability and near-evident desirability. In a book that perhaps merits description as the fullest and most mature statement of 1960s-style stability (through mutual vulnerability) theory, Jerome Kahan wrote: "A mutual stability approach, in the broadest sense, rests on the premise that the United States is benefited if the Soviet Union maintains a strategic deterrent capability comparable in overall strength to our own; it is an acceptance of both the mutual assured destruction relationship and numerical parity." A little earlier he had written, "If, then, the USSR's strategic doctrine is largely understandable and somewhat comparable to ours, it is possible to establish a relatively effective U.S. policy of mutual stability."[11]

The United States seemed to know what it wanted and to believe that what was good for the United States would come to be seen by the Soviet Union as good for it also. A stable military balance, in American perspective, was one in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which each side's military forces looked roughly comparable and neither side believed it could gain a significant military advantage by striking first, because neither side would be able to protect its domestic assets against retaliation. These elements of stability derived initially, in good part, from discouraging analyses of the future promise of damage-limiting strategies. Military-technological prediction—that future societal vulnerability will be a fact, not a matter for choice—was transformed into normative terms. Far from being a problem, mutual vulnerability was seen as an opportunity to establish more stable Soviet-American strategic relations. The Soviet Union might prefer to compete for "useful advantage" so long as that was believed to be attainable, but technology surely has a logic that the Soviets must, and will, respect. In 1970 Roman Kolkowicz expressed the then popular, and perhaps even plausible, view that

> Soviet strategic doctrine and capabilities appear to have lagged behind those of the United States by about five years . . . , modern defense technology determines to a large extent the kind of strategic doctrines and policies that will be adopted by the superpowers. Thus, technology seems to have a levelling effect which subsumes political, ideological and social differences in various political systems.[12]

The convergence of strategic ideas hoped for in the late 1960s and early 1970s—that is, a Soviet convergence with the American concept of a stable military balance—did not occur. By 1979-80 most American commentators on Soviet-American strategic policy issues accepted as a very probable fact the existence of a "conceptual gap" between Soviet and American thinking on strategic issues that appeared to be enduring, because each side's thought was rooted in what has come to be termed "strategic culture."[13]

The important difference between 1980 and 1970 (or 1960) is that what was then plainly recognized as a possibility—that the Soviet Union would not wish to engage in genuinely "reciprocal measures for arms stabilization"—has now become plausible fact. Indeed, a major question that should be posed is whether, or perhaps how, the United States can conduct serious arms control business with the Soviet Union, which shows no evidence of endorsing a recognizable or attractive concept of strategic stability. Through the 1960s and at least part of the 1970s such a troublesome question could be, though should not have been, ignored or deferred. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, when American arms control theory was being forged, uncooperative Soviet ideas and practices could plausibly be interpreted as reflections of a relatively backward technology or of a policy/intellectual "lag." By the early 1970s the SALT process appeared to carry promise for the cooperative management of strategic relations. It was recognized that the Soviet Union still had to catch up in some important military respects and that program momentum reflecting pre-SALT I thinking and practices would take some time to be amended to be compatible with the new relationship.

Today, the U.S. defense community has to grapple with the implications of the hypothesis that Soviet military ideas and activities are deeply rooted in local soil and hence are very likely to endure; that the Soviet General Staff is extremely well acquainted with Western ideas on stability—Soviet military thinking is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not crude and "uneducated"; and that there are no important apparent strains between the policy preferences of the Soviet military and the Soviet political leadership.[14]

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this very widespread, if somewhat belated, Western recognition of the strategic cultural distinctiveness of the Soviet Union. The distinctiveness blurs markedly, of course, as Robert Jervis has observed, if Soviet military thinking is compared with American professional military thinking.[15] The American military establishment prepares to fight and, if possible, to win wars, and probably would prefer to support a military doctrine as traditional in its concerns as that espoused by the Soviet Union.[16] Yet it is only in the Soviet Union that those preferences are fully expressed in postural terms.

Soviet thought on the military dimensions of statecraft, what loosely can be called "strategic theory," is distinguished by its rarity.[17] Soviet writings tend to focus on efficient force preparation and implementation—generically *operational* matters—or on grand-strategic, highly politicized topics. There are no functional Soviet equivalents to the Western theories of deterrence, limited war, and arms control, just as the key Western concepts spawned by those theories—stability, escalation control, bargaining, sufficiency/adequacy, and the rest—appear to play no identifiable role in guiding Soviet military planning.[18] In the half-light of the growing appreciation of the alien character of Soviet strategic culture, U.S. policymakers have to reassess the relevance, and prudence, of the strategic ideas that have held intellectual and declaratory (policy, if not always war-planning) sway for the past fifteen years.

Despite the evidence accumulating on Russian/Soviet strategic culture and the military-program momentum implications of that culture, Western commentators continue to deny, implicitly, that stability is a condition describing a military-political *relationship*. "Stability," as it pervades much of American theorizing about deterrence questions, is essentially static and absolute. It tends to lack a sense of competition. Using this logic, the United States has a deterrence problem of finite physical dimensions. The complex military balance is stable if the Soviet urban-industrial target set is adequately covered and if the United States looks, and preferably is, resolute in its willingness to retaliate.

What kind of damage would most likely be judged acceptable by a Soviet leadership? This question has been posed, and even answered of late[19]—with conclusions that cast grave doubts on the merits of the society destruction bedrock of the theory that identifies stability with mutual vulnerability—but the covering of the urban-industrial target set still is accorded pride of place in official U.S. stable deterrence prose.[20]

It may be that this society punishment oriented theory can provide a robust basis for a stable military balance, even in an adversary relationship with an alien Soviet strategic culture. It is possible that the Soviet military (and political) establishment is seeking the unattainable in its evident pursuit of a war-waging/war-winning capability, and that the United States would be ill-advised to compete very vigorously with military programs designed to improve war-waging performance. However, now that it is generally recognized that the Soviet military effort marches to the beat of a distinctly non-American drummer,[21] and as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Soviet military competitive position continues to improve across the board, there should be no serious resistance to consideration of the possibility that the consequences of mainstream Western stability theory may lead to under-recognized dangers.

The ideas that comprise the concept of a stable military balance reflect fairly faithfully the world view, values, and pertinent education of those commentators, policymakers, and theorists who have articulated American strategic culture.[22] The United States is a satisfied world power with a fundamentally defensive strategic mission as its international responsibility. From 1946, when *The Absolute Weapon* was published,[23] to the present day, American strategic theorists have tended to argue, explicitly or implicitly, that the development of nuclear weapons has imposed a "technological peace." The mainstream concept of stability speaks eloquently to the long-recognized U.S. tendency to define conditions as problems to be solved. The existence of very large and diverse strategic nuclear arsenals *solves* the problem of possible premeditated war between nuclear-armed states, because the war initiator will know that he cannot deny the enemy the capability of destroying his society in retaliation. Moreover, this ability to destroy a society in a second strike can deter not only attacks on the U.S. homeland, but also—with only a modest loss of credibility—attacks on at least some of the overseas vital interests of the United States. The balance of terror is thus massively indelicate. As Soviet strategic capabilities improved relative to those of the United States over the decade 1965-75, the United States sought to retain or restore the credibility of strategic deterrence through the advertisement of more flexible targeting designs (the so-called Schlesinger doctrine).[24] However, it is important to note that 1970s-style strategic flexibility was, at bottom, an endeavor to retain the credibility of the ultimate sanction of the very large countersociety strike. What beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives are reflected in this simple theory?

First, it reflects a belief that nuclear war would mean the end of history. The assumed certainty of unrestrained escalation and mutual destruction leads easily to the conclusion that there can be no intelligent way of preparing for or waging nuclear war.[25]

Even if some stable balance theorists are prepared to admit that nuclear war could have quite a wide range of outcomes, they tend to reject the possible policy implication—that the United States should design a policy and posture to minimize the prospective damage in war. U.S. political culture, unlike Soviet political culture, does not take an instrumental view of the value of the lives, and quality of life, of its citizens. But U.S. foreign policy, in its potential need for military support, rests heavily on nuclear threat. However, no operational nuclear strategy is compatible with U.S. societal values. An important reason U.S. strategic commentators have focused so heavily on deterrence, as opposed to military operational questions, is that they realized American society is profoundly unwilling to contemplate, or debate coolly, the prospect of losing tens of millions of people.

For the better part of two decades, the United States has been highly dependent on latent nuclear threat, but American society and even the defense community have shown little inclination to think beyond prewar deterrence, let alone to invest large resources in a capability to prevail in, survive, and recover

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from a nuclear war. Michael Howard was close to the mark when he wrote recently:

> But such credibility [of nuclear response] depends not simply on a perceived balance, or imbalance, of weapons systems, but on perceptions of the nature of the society whose leaders are threatening such retaliation. Peoples who are not prepared to make the effort necessary for operational defense are even less likely to support a decision to initiate a nuclear exchange from which they will themselves suffer almost inconceivable destruction, even if that decision is taken at the lowest possible level of nuclear escalation.[26]

Second, stable balance theory reflects a conviction that an enduring East-West political *modus vivendi* is possible, if only because nuclear arsenals mean that neither superpower would dare intrude into regions well understood to be of vital interest to the other. The relationship between intense arms competition, its associated first-strike alarms, and political tension remains ill understood, but a plateau of stable deterrence resting on total societal vulnerability and sufficient weapon invulnerability, should—so the argument goes—calm many of the anxieties that the arms competition can foster.

The more reasonable supporters of SALT I tended to avoid asserting that the Soviet political leadership and General Staff had been educated to accept American-style stable deterrence thinking. They assumed instead that American strategic vigilance would deny the Soviet Union any militarily meaningful future advantage and that Soviet leaders would rein in their programs appropriately. In addition, it was widely assumed that the five-year "Interim Agreement" on strategic offensive arms would be superceded by a permanent treaty regime that would greatly assist stability, owing to the survivability for offensive forces and the predictability for defense planning it would provide.[27] Stability could be enforced through expensive competitive effort, but the case for attempting to encourage stability through negotiated joint management of the strategic balance had to be attractive.

In short, stable balance theory was believed to reflect inescapable technological truths;[28] those truths were to be codified, at least in part, via the SALT process; and the SALT process was to be both the centerpiece and the beneficiary of a multichannel and increasingly entangling détente venture.

Third, stable deterrence theory indicated "how much is enough."[29] U.S. strategic culture is oriented toward problem-solving. The U.S. defense and arms control community has extreme difficulty accommodating the idea that it is condemned to an endless competition with the Soviet Union. Stable deterrence plus the parity principle appeared to reduce the stress and strain of unwelcome and unfamiliar strategic thought to a fairly simple problem of efficient management.

Fourth, stable deterrence, with its logical implication of a finite need for weapons, appeals to the Western belief that peacetime defense preparation has an almost wholly negative social impact. An insular strategic culture, such as that of the United States, tends generally to view as inherently wasteful the allocation of scarce resources for defense functions. It supports substantial armed forces in peacetime only because such forces are, at best, regrettable necessities. Major defense program initiatives often are taken belatedly and re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

luctantly, and have to be justified very specifically in terms of identifiable or very plausible threats.

Even on its own terms it is legitimate to question the validity of mainstream U.S. stable deterrence theory. For example: as Henry Kissinger has argued forcefully, in policy practice it constitutes "a revolution in NATO doctrine"[30] (which was not noticed, or was simply disregarded, by its proponents); it has nothing to say on the problem of self-deterrence (which is not a trivial deficiency, because it is likely that the United States would be under the most pressure to lead an escalation process); and it is not responsive to the fact that deterrent calculations are not always relevant in the sequence of events that lead to war. Leaving such reservations aside,[31] the most troublesome aspect of mainstream stable mutual deterrence theory is that it does not speak to Soviet reality.

The Soviet Union

Soviet thinking on the preferred character of the complex East-West military balance is easily identified as a product of the lessons perceived in Russian and Soviet history, the nature and rationale of the Soviet state, and what may best be termed "strategic logic." The Soviet Union cannot endorse a Western-style concept of military stability. The legitimacy of Communist party rule in the Soviet imperium resides in its claim to be the sole authoritative interpreter of *the* scientifically correct theory of historical change—and the peoples and the physical resources of that imperium, allied to "progressive forces" everywhere, are the instruments for effecting that process of historical change. Save as a tactical ploy, the Soviet Union cannot endorse a concept of stability in the relations between socialist and nonsocialist states. Richard Pipes almost certainly is correct when he argues that Marxism-Leninism became the state ideology in Russia because the grosser features of that ideology, and the practices that they legitimized, fit so well a Russian national political character marked by cunning, brutality, and submissiveness.[32] Soviet military thinking today, by this argument, is influenced by, and expresses, a strategic culture that is, at root, Russian rather than Marxist-Leninist.[33] The important point is that obligatory Soviet ideology and Russian historical impulses both drive Soviet military thinking in the same direction.

The commitment to permanent struggle, the need for eternal vigilance, the militarized character of society, the fundamental distrust of independent power centers (domestic and foreign)—all are enduring features of Russian/Soviet strategic culture. "The revolution in military affairs," as evidenced in Soviet military programs and discussed in detail in the Penkovskiy "Special Collection," was dramatically different from the revolution in strategic thinking caused by nuclear weapons in the West.

The Western nonoperational focus on deterrence as opposed to defense is totally alien to Soviet strategic culture and, indeed, is viewed as dangerous, irresponsible, and scientifically incorrect. Since 1956 the Soviet Union has rejected Lenin's "inevitability of war" thesis, but it has continued to believe that war is possible, that the outcomes could range between victory and defeat, and that more military power cannot fail to pay political dividends.[34] The notion of having enough military power is alien to Soviet thought and appears to be con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trary to the Soviet reading of their history and the histories of other states.[35] The Soviet Union recognizes that equivalence and parity are the *necessary* basis for East-West security relations, but that the necessary basis is not, and cannot be, accepted as being *sufficient*.

Quite aside from any ideological imperative, Soviet geopolitics—like Russian geopolitics in times past—is the story of near-continuous struggle against actual or potential enemies who posed, or might pose, a threat to the (multi)national existence.[36] Russian and Soviet history teach the lesson that "those who fall behind, get beaten."[37] The Soviet Union is improving its security condition by increasing its control over its external environment.

Even discarding cultural and geopolitical explanations, the detail of Soviet military activity drives one to recognition of the deeper imperatives that have molded Soviet strategic culture.[38] There is an enormous inertia behind the Soviet military establishment, some of which can be explained in Western military-rational ways. But much of it reflects a mindless movement that flows from habitual "safe-siding" through minimal decision-making, eschewing of potentially dangerous initiatives, and generally focusing on doing what one knows one can do—in a society that is near-obsessed with the fear of disruptive change and that seeks to avoid risks.

Of course, innovation is possible in the Soviet Union, though it generally is ordered and even organized from above. The Soviet military buildup and modernization programs of the past fifteen years (in particular) speak to forces very deep within the character of the Soviet system. Alarmed Western observers see clear evidence that the Soviet Union is building more military power than it needs for defense (a totally alien formulation in Soviet perspective) and rejecting the Western concept of a stable military balance. What we see, rather, is the cumulative product of a bureaucratic-industrial system that rarely changes a course once set (there is no evidence to suggest any official Soviet desire to change military direction) and that is steadily providing the military means needed for preponderance—the Soviet vision of a desirable military relationship with potential enemies.

The strategic cultural attitudes that flow from its history make it unlikely that the Soviet Union will join the United States in managing a stable military balance. The Soviet commitment to compete for relative advantage (real or illusory) is so fundamental, and so rational in Soviet terms, that stability can only be enforced.

The implications of this strategic cultural theme could be very grim for Western security. By dint of fairly steady effort, and moved by a prudence that has expansive military requirement implications, the Soviet Union could come to believe that in East-West crises it will be the United States that will back down. The ideas and military program details associated with the dominant Western concept of stability amount to a posture, military and civilian, that is not serious about the actual conduct of war. To itemize: the United States has a very limited hard-target counterforce and countercontrol capability; it lacks survivable command, control, communications, and intelligence (C^3I) assets; it has no homeland defense; it has no real plans for timely industrial mobilization or for postwar recovery; it has no vision of how *all* parts of the military posture should cooperate in a global war; it has made only the most feeble preparation

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for strategic-force reconstitution; and it has no convincing story to tell vis à vis war aims and the political character of a postwar international order.[39]

These criticisms are leveled in the context of attempts to provide adequately in those areas by a Soviet adversary.[40] That some weapons and operating practices promote stability and that others promote instability is an idea that is alien to Soviet strategic culture.[41] For many years the Soviet Union has attended, in great detail, to what in Western perspective might be called the unilateral crisis stability of her military posture: missile silos have been superhardened; some missiles are truly mobile (SS-20s and stockpiled SS-16s); political and military command and control facilities have been proliferated and superhardened, and so on. Whether for reasons of political-cultural insensitivity or cold military calculation, the Soviet Union seems either unwilling or unable to take a systemic approach to what Western analysts identify as stability problems. Judging by the evidence of Soviet deeds, and to employ Western terminology, it is stabilizing, in Soviet perspective, for their strategic and combined armed forces to threaten successful surprise attacks against U.S. strategic systems and NATO's posture in Europe.[42] Similarly, Soviet military thinkers see nothing unstable about a strategic context wherein Soviet society is afforded some useful measure of protection via civil defense and air defense and American society has none.

There is a distinct possibility that a future U.S. administration could believe the Soviet Union to be deterred by the assumed short fuse from provocative (Soviet) military action to nuclear holocaust—a belief that projects stable deterrence reasoning onto Soviet decision-making processes—while a Soviet leadership could believe it had a very good prospect of winning a war and that the United States should appreciate its own weak political position and back down. In short, both sides might falsely project the perspective of their strategic culture onto the other, with very dangerous consequences.

Stability Dissected

The concept of stability is used in a wide variety of senses, among which two merit individual analytic attention: arms race stability and crisis stability.

Arms Race Stability

The idea of arms race stability holds that the basic engine of competition is the first-strike fear encouraged by defense programs designed to threaten at least part of the opponent's ability to wreak massive societal damage in a second strike.[43] Thus a stable arms competition is one wherein neither side invests in programs that the other would view as a challenge to its assured destruction capability, and hence would be motivated to offset. This kind of logic was elaborated in some detail in the late 1960s. It was argued that the arms race was driven not so much by the reality of first-strike danger as by the fears that flowed from anticipation of such danger.[44]

"Sympathetic parallelism" in armament programs was the logical corollary of the arms race "spiral" theory. Just as the superpowers could stimulate each other to build increasingly capable weapons, so should they be able, through deliberate restraint and perhaps explicit cooperative management, to remove much of the anxiety that drives reactive armament programs.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The concept of arms race stability carries with it the stable deterrence ideas that incorporate the desideratum of mutual assured destruction capabilities, but such linkage is not inevitable. Arms race stability could obtain where one side maintains a permanent, variably substantial lead and is in a political, financial, and industrial position to deter most arms race challenges. With some qualifications, this kind of arms race stability characterized Great Britain's naval relations with her actual and potential rivals from the 1840s until 1914.

Stability can also obtain when there is a rapid change in technological generations and considerable unpredictability concerning the building programs of rivals, yet where a tolerable balance of military power is maintained—albeit almost exclusively through competition. Indeed, as Bernard Brodie observed in assessing the complex naval competition of the later decades of the nineteenth century, there were periods in strategic history when stability, by any reasonable definition, was best maintained through unrestrained competition.[45] Arms control processes are as likely to constrain the wrong (i.e., ultimately "stabilizing") as the right (i.e., ultimately "destabilizing") defense technologies—given human frailty in strategic prediction.

In its loosest, though most easily defensible, sense, arms race stability could pertain simply to the pace and degree of rival postural change, regardless of the character of that change. An unusually rapid succession of deployed weapon generations on both sides would appear to many people to constitute an unstable situation. However, such rapid change may reflect a particularly fecund period of parallel defense research activity rather than unusual hostility, and may be fully compatible with some important definitions of a stable situation. Nonetheless, rapid postural change might very likely breed fears abroad that militarily significant, if transitory, breakthroughs were a distinct possibility, breakthroughs that might facilitate or enable disarming first strikes to be planned with some confidence.

Perhaps the major problem with the concept of arms race stability is that it rests on a theory of arms race dynamics that is easily challenged.[46] The stability theory of the 1960s posited an abstract and very simple model of arms competition. The banner-carriers for arms race stability in the late 1960s leapt from abstract propositions to defense policy claims and arms control proposals (e.g., do not deploy BMD or MIRV because they will be destabilizing). The arms race (and crisis) instability claims used to challenge BMD and MIRV (and, later, the Mk 12A RV and MX, and so on) were, by and large, interesting and internally consistent. But were they true, and how might they be validated or invalidated? This argument applies, of course, to all sides in the ongoing U.S. defense debate.

It is possible that Soviet offensive force deployments in the 1970s would have been greater than actually was the case had the United States, in the absence of the ABM treaty, deployed Safeguard or Site Defense BMD. However, in the presence of U.S. BMD deployment, opponents would very likely have attributed the pace and much of the character of the Soviet ICBM and SLBM programs to alleged Soviet BMD-offset motivations. The kind of Soviet offensive-force deployments that lack a strong strategic rationale in the absence of U.S. BMD, assuming there is a mutual assured destruction framework to Soviet thinking, have occurred anyway.

On the basis of the often ambiguous and incomplete evidence available, the U.S. defense and arms control community should now consider the propo-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sition that Soviet arms programs are driven not by a determination to (over)compensate for American programs that could threaten Soviet maintenance of an adequate capability to destroy American society, but, rather, by some combination of a doctrinal imperative to improve Soviet war-waging/war-winning ability and bureaucratic defense-industrial momentum. This proposition suggests that for many years our arms control physicians may have diagnosed falsely (and hence sought to cure inappropriately) the causes of the arms race disease.

Many people who debate arms race stability/instability charges are really concerned that continuous competitive military-technological innovation might open temporary windows of opportunity for possible exploitation. "Gaps" might occur between some elements of superpower postures, but they should not be such as to call into serious question the overall quality of deterrent effect purchased by the United States through its military investment.

Deterrence stability is compatible with a formidable rate of change in competing postures. For example, the charge that the MX will be destabilizing can be sustained only if arms race instability is equated with a significant change in posture that may provide a substantial incentive for postural change on the Soviet side. A crisis instability charge is fragile in that the very survivability of a system such as the MX should remove the Soviet incentive to go first in a "use them or lose them" spirit.

Crisis Stability

The concept of crisis stability refers to a strategic condition wherein the very character, readiness, and mobilization procedures of armed forces in confrontation should not themselves comprise the proximate cause of war. Very often crisis stability/instability is deemed to inhere in particular kinds of weapons. However, as Thomas Schelling has argued persuasively, to focus on weapon technology is to miss a good part of the potential problem.

> To impute this influence to "weaponry" is to focus too narrowly on technology. It is weapons, organizations, plans, geography, communications, warning systems, intelligence, and even beliefs and doctrines about the conduct of war that together have this influence. The point is that this complex of military factors is not neutral in the process by which war may come about.[47]

Schelling draws a particularly valuable distinction between the static and dynamic dimensions of (crisis) stability:

> The static dimension reflects the expected outcome, at any given moment, if either side launches war. The dynamic dimension reflects what happens to that calculation if either side or both sides should *move* in the direction of war, by alert, mobilization, demonstration, and other actions that unfold over time.[48]

It is easy to slip into self-congratulation concerning the *apparent* stability of the military standoff in Europe and the central nuclear relationship. However, the stability of those balances is not tested day-by-day, nor even by the kinds of crises such as those over Berlin, Hungary, Cuba, and Czechoslovakia. In none of those cases is it very plausible to argue that either the Soviet Union or NATO

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was strongly motivated to launch a theater or general war. The real test for crisis stability would be the one occasion in forty or fifty years when nearly everything appeared to be at stake and one or both leadership groups could not see any nonmilitary solutions to its, or their, problems.

A force posture and strategic doctrine that is good enough for one crisis may not be for another. Anyone inclined to believe that U.S. and NATO forces are broadly resilient to crisis stress should ask himself what it might take to dissuade a very desperate Soviet leadership.

Robert Jervis has argued, quite rightly, that rival schools of thought over the requirements of deterrence differ over how much deterring it is prudent to assume the Soviet Union might need: "Thus there is a disagreement over 'how much credibility is enough': two policy analysts therefore might agree on how likely the Russians thought it was that a limited war would escalate and disagree over whether they could be deterred."[49]

Taken to its logical extreme, the more pessimistic argument might lead to the conclusion that at some point in the future the Soviet Union might be so desperate as to be "beyond deterrence"—meaning, again logically, that considerations of crisis stability, however rigorous, would be irrelevant. The only question remaining would be: How well would the West fare in the war? Analysts may agree on the general characteristics of a crisis-stable military balance and even on the character of Soviet strategic culture, yet disagree on whether particular U.S. military postures are sufficiently crisis-stable. The reason for the disagreement lies in the range of political crises that each is willing to consider as relevant to the sizing and nature of the U.S. defense effort. Some interpretations of the military implications of crisis stability have a potentially dangerous managerial, as opposed to a strategic, perspective on security issues. Crisis stability is fully compatible with a U.S. strategic force posture that could take the initiative, compete for escalation dominance, and, if need be, fight the war through to a military decision. However, crisis stability very often is considered narrowly in the context either of a rigid application of mutual assured destruction reasoning or, beyond that in sophistication, in the minor addendum of flexible targeting. Typically, any capability that threatens Soviet strategic forces, prelaunch or during mission execution, is held to be an affront to crisis stability. Crisis stability properly understood does not lend its conceptual authority to such judgments. For reason of extended deterrence duties, the United States cannot afford a crisis stability that precludes first use of strategic nuclear weapons. Nicholas Spykman writes: "There is no possibility of action if one's strength is fully checked; there is a chance for a positive foreign policy only if there is a margin of force which can be freely used."[50]

Jerome Kahan has written that "in order to establish a mutual stability policy, it is necessary to classify strategic systems as either stabilizing or destabilizing and to avoid the latter."[51] Following classical mutual vulnerability theory, Kahan claims that weapons threatening to the (countervalue) mission performance of strategic offensive forces are destabilizing, "since they can directly negate an opponent's deterrent capability."[52] Examples of "stabilizing" weapons include SLBMs; MRVs, or inaccurate MIRVs; long-range cruise missiles; manned bombers; and missile site (or bomber base) BMD. "Destabilizing" weapons include accurate MIRVs, strategic ASW systems, area BMD, and area air defense.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This simple classification is only as useful as are its doctrinal premises. If, for example, the Soviet Union does not equate the quality of its deterrent with its ability to devastate urban-industrial America, defense of the urban-industrial U.S. homeland would not threaten the Soviet deterrent. Moreover, it can be argued, as noted above, that overall stability in the East-West military-political relationship requires that the United States be able to initiate strategic nuclear use in defense of forward-located allies, and that such central war initiation, no matter how selective, cannot be credible in the event, unless a president of the United States was confident that damage to the U.S. homeland could be limited severely.

Given the Soviet traditional military approach to nuclear war planning, strategies and tactics that in the West tend to be judged as destabilizing almost certainly have no such implications in Soviet thinking. Soviet political and military thinkers would be most unlikely, for example, to view programs intended to provide active and passive defense of the American homeland as anything other than common sense.[53] To the extent that those programs threatened the success of Soviet plans for the military conduct of the war, they would be candidates for some Soviet response. However, the mechanistic ying-yang envisaged in some simpleminded defense-offense/action-reaction theories of the arms race is the stuff of the (American) seminar room, not of the real world of Soviet defense decision-making.

The small strategic theory community has paid very little attention to the place, let alone the details, of C^{3}1. Like peace and security, everyone, from every school of thought, is *for* good C^{3}1. Understandably, it would be difficult to generate a debate over whether the United States requires high-quality C^{3}1. Noncontroversial subjects tend to escape attention. John Steinbruner has written that "the most severe problems with the concept of stability result from the fact that its technical definition has not included a critical dimension of strategic capability: namely, the physical and organizational arrangements for exercising deliberate command of strategic forces."[54] Steinbruner argues that when the concept of stability is expanded to accommodate C^{3}1 desiderata, the preferred force structure (given classic stability themes) might alter markedly. For example: "The submarine-based strategic force which is clearly the most stable under the conventional definition is just as clearly the worst in terms of command stability."[55]

Those theorists who believe that deterrence is a function of mutual societal vulnerability should be concerned lest command instability results in unintended armed conflict or in essentially uncontrolled escalation in the course of a war. Those theorists who believe that deterrence flows from the promise of proficient military conduct should be concerned lest command instability denies the U.S. armed forces the ability to wage war in a militarily intelligent fashion.

A good fraction of the strategic debate of recent years rested on quite unrealistic assumptions concerning the quality and survivability of U.S. (and NATO) C^{3}1 assets. There was much weaving of interesting strategic targeting tapestries in the 1970s, but I suspect that most of the targeting schemes that envisaged the protracted and progressive unfolding of a deliberate design of destruction (for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

carefully calculated military and political effect) failed to take adequate note of likely or possible command instability phenomena (U.S. *and* Soviet).

There is ample evidence suggesting that classic stability theory, which encourages the belief that nuclear war would be the end of history, promoted a relaxed climate concerning the many details of actually managing a central war campaign. A dominant belief that nuclear forces have failed if they are ever used is hardly likely to stimulate officials to think very realistically about command stability problems in a nuclear war environment. Steinbruner's persuasive advocacy of the need to place command stability at the center of nuclear (and other) planning concerns fails to recognize that the relative neglect of command stability issues flows in good part from the widespread acceptance of a classic stability theory (based on the assumption of the desirability of mutual societal vulnerability) that he approves.

Stability and U.S. Strategy

John Newhouse, the privileged chronicler of the NSC perspective on the SALT I negotiations, asserted that stability was "a truly divine goal."[56] Today it is apparent that the theories of arms race and crisis stability that permeated the U.S. approach to SALT I were either wrong or misleading. At a general conceptual level, arms race and crisis stability are, of course, unexceptionable. No one favors frenetic arms race activity per se or military postures that could precipitate war: so much is well-nigh axiomatic. Where the mainstream of U.S. strategic theorizing erred was in tying the multifold *concept* of stability to a particular theory of deterrence that did not match the burgeoning evidence. That theory held that each superpower had an assured destruction (countervalue) requirement vis à vis the other and that an enduring stable deterrence relationship could be constructed only on such a basis.

This theory of arms race stability was wrong—it could not explain the course of the strategic arms competition in the 1970s (under the aegis of SALT I or in the shadow of SALT II). Whatever mix of motives and institutional forces drove Soviet weapon procurement, the principle of sufficiency supported by the idea of assured destruction (let alone *mutual* assured destruction) clearly was not prominent among them. It is a matter of historical record that the Soviet Union since 1972 has worked hard to undermine whatever degree of strategic stability (based on mutual societal vulnerability) there may have been at that time. In their ICBM, air defense, BMD (in research and development), ASW, and civil defense programs the Soviets have provided persuasive evidence that their systemic view of the arms competition is dramatically different from the view adhered to by succeeding U.S. administrations. They have sought, and are continuing to seek, "useful advantage" through whatever degree of preponderance the United States permits.[57]

The "classical" theory of crisis stability may or may not be correct; fortunately, the 1970s have not provided a field test. However, the Soviet perspective on strategic matters suggests that the explanatory power of the theory may be poor. Richard Burt expressed this skepticism when he wrote: "Central strategic war, according to Soviet literature, is not likely to stem from mecha-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nistic instabilities within the superpower military relationship, but rather from real and enduring differences between competing political systems and national interests."[58]

In principle, certainly, it is sensible to argue that it would be undesirable for the superpowers to deploy forces that lend themselves to first-strike destruction. However, it is no less sensible to argue that "the reciprocal fear of surprise attack"[59] as the principal proximate cause of war merits probable identification as a U.S. "mechanistic" fantasy. This is not to endorse a total indifference to Burt's "mechanistic instabilities," but to suggest that the traditional theory of crisis stability—on the basis of which particular weapons and doctrines are praised or vilified—needs considerable amendment. It overemphasizes the probable role of mechanistic instabilities in an acute East-West crisis while taking a wholly apolitical approach to an inherently political phenomenon; and it is inimical to the extended deterrence requirement that the United States be capable and willing to take the strategic initiative.

Many of the elements of a new theory of strategic stability already have been expressed in official prose and action over the past five years. However, the theoretical revolution remains incomplete. What is missing, above all else, is a recognition of the pervasiveness and longevity of competition and a positive approach to the functions of strategic nuclear forces. On this last point, for example, Harold Brown treats both arms race and crisis stability in negative terms. For arms race stability, the United States must ensure "that the balance is not capable of being overturned by a sudden Soviet technological breakthrough"; for crisis stability, it must ensure that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union would feel itself under pressure to initiate an exchange in a crisis.[60]

Brown's concerns are appropriate, but they do not approach the heart of what stable deterrent ideas should indicate vis à vis U.S. force planning. An adequate concept of stability has to be anchored in a prospectively effective theory of deterrence at the highest levels of violence. Crisis stability should be approached in terms of the calculations of probable war-waging prowess made by the parties involved. Concern about mechanistic, or technical, crisis (in)stability would be policy-appropriate only in a condition of such intense antipathy that overall central war campaign analyses would dominate decision processes. The Soviet Union would not "go to war" because a large fraction of its ICBM force was theoretically vulnerable to a U.S. first strike,[61] any more than would the United States should the situation be reversed. Crisis stability, if possible, would flow from a Soviet belief that any escalation of the military conflict would produce negative military and ultimately political returns. The U.S. Department of Defense acknowledges this logic,[62] but it does not recognize that the United States is most unlikely to be able to enforce stability if damage to the U.S. homeland cannot be limited severely.[63]

Strategic stability should not be equated with strategic stalemate. The United States cannot afford a master strategic concept that implies thoroughgoing *mutual* U.S.-Soviet strategic deterrence.[64] If strategic stability is to retain its preeminence as a U.S. policy goal, it should be redefined for compatibility with the extended deterrent duties that the geopolitics of the Western Alliance place on the U.S. strategic force posture. A stable strategic balance, in U.S./NATO perspective, is one that would permit the United States to:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

- Initiate central strategic nuclear employment in expectation of gain (a requirement of NATO strategy)
- Seize and hold a position of "escalation dominance"
- Deter Soviet escalation, or counterescalation, by a potent threat posed to the most vital assets of the Soviet state and by the ability of the United States to limit damage to itself[65]

A Soviet Union confronting a United States with military and civilian programs appropriately supportive of the above objectives would have very little incentive either to effect a military "breakout" from a regional crisis or to engage very persistently in a competition in risk-taking at very high levels of violence. Crisis stability would be enforced through the Soviet perception of the United States as a very tough wartime adversary indeed. It might be objected that a U.S. president should not be entrusted with the capabilities suggested above.[66] However, even if such a concern is valid (which is extremely dubious), it must be weighed against the greater danger of a president not having recourse to such capabilities. The concept of strategic stability envisaged here is the only one that speaks persuasively to Soviet strategic culture, and it is intended, of necessity, only to minimize that self-deterrence element that is the most crippling deficiency in existing U.S. official strategic thought. Self-deterrence cannot be removed altogether because the United States would know that even under the aegis of a stable military balance, as defined here, tens of millions of American casualties would most likely result from central war. Nonetheless, the United States would have a guiding concept from which military requirements could be derived in support of militarily and politically intelligent strategic targeting plans. This concept relates robustness in crisis regimes to anticipation of success or defeat in war and to a judiciously competitive program of peacetime armament.

As stated earlier, the identifiable Soviet approach to arms competition is the steady acquisition of a more and more formidable war-fighting/war-survival capability. It is highly improbable that the Soviet Union can be dissuaded from pursuing this approach.[67] The evidence of the 1970s suggests that although in principle stability might be encouraged through negotiated SALT restraints—whereby both sides agree to forgo those capabilities that the mutual vulnerability theory of stability holds to be undesirable—it is far more likely that stability has to be enforced through competition. It is virtually self-evident that Soviet strategic culture precludes the negotiation route to enhanced stability, except in the context of very vigorous U.S. strategic effort. Moreover, there is growing agreement within the Western defense community that stability cannot rest intelligently on the threat of massive societal destruction (save, possibly, as an ultimate threat). Such damage is unacceptable to the United States, while it may be insufficiently unacceptable to Soviet politicians. If the U.S. concept of a stable military balance in extremis makes more or less formal reference to the assured destruction threat, the United States has a deterrence theory that probably is fundamentally unsound. The "ultimate threat" posed by the United States would not be credible because it would *never* be in the U.S. interest actually to implement it. Execution of such a threat would be the negation of strategy: in and of itself it would solve no military or political problems, while it would near-guarantee a Soviet retaliation that would preclude a U.S. recovery.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The strategic nuclear targeting review of the late 1970s has prepared the way for serious discussion of the concept of stability suggested in this essay.[68] The U.S. government recognizes that Soviet military and *political* assets should be the primary focus for U.S. strategic offensive attention;[69] that "limited nuclear options" have little promise unless the United States has a good theory of escalation dominance (and the forces to match); and that Soviet economic "recovery" targets are both difficult to identify and are probably of relatively little interest. However, Washington does not yet recognize that crisis and intrawar stability cannot rest on intelligent strategic *offensive* planning alone. The U.S. Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) can have integrity only in the context of active and passive defense. Fortunately, there is good reason to believe that the technology of air and missile defense for the late 1980s and beyond,[70] with substantial civil defense assistance, could restore a much more even relationship between offense and defense, and a useful meaning to the concept of stability.

References

This paper represents my views alone. It has had only limited circulation among the Hudson Institute staff and no formal review procedure. No opinions, statements of fact, or conclusions can properly be attributed to the Institute, its staff, its Members, or its contracting agencies.

I am very grateful to Keith Payne of the Hudson Institute professional staff for his valuable assistance with this article.

[1]John Steinbruner, "National Security and the Concept of Strategic Stability," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 22 (3) (September 1978): 413.

[2]For example, see Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960). "It is not the 'balance'—the sheer equality or symmetry in the situation—that constitutes mutual deterrence; it is the *stability* of the balance. The balance is stable only when neither, in striking first, can destroy the other's ability to strike back" p. 232.

[3]Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London: Croom, Helm, 1979), p. 14.

[4]"Hostages must remain unambiguously vulnerable and retaliatory forces must remain unambiguously invulnerable." Ian Smart, *Advanced Strategic Missiles: A Short Guide, Adelphi Papers* no. 63 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, December 1969), p. 28.

[5]See Harold Brown, *Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 29, 1980), pp. 65, 67.

[6]See Colin S. Gray and Keith B. Payne, "Victory Is Possible," *Foreign Policy*, no. 39 (Summer 1980): 14-27.

[7]See Stanley Sienkiewicz, "Observations on the Impact of Uncertainty in Strategic Analysis," *World Politics*, 30, II (1) (October 1979): 90-110.

[8]Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*, R-2154-AF (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, September 1977), p. 8.

[9]John Erickson, "The Soviet Military System: Doctrine, Technology and 'Style,'" in *Soviet Military Power and Performance*, Erickson and E. J. Feuchtwanger (eds.) (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1979), pp. 18-43.

[10]Y. Harkabi, *Nuclear War and Nuclear Peace* (Jerusalem: Israeli Program for Scientific Translations, 1966), p. 48.

[11]Jerome Kahan, *Security in the Nuclear Age: Developing U.S. Strategic Arms Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1975), p. 272.

[12]Roman Kolkowicz et al., *The Soviet Union and Arms Control—A Superpower Dilemma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 35-57.

[13]See Fritz Ermarth, "Contrasts in American and Soviet Strategic Thought," *International Security*, 3 (2) (Fall 1978): 138-55.

[14]See William E. Odom, "Who Controls Whom In Moscow," *Foreign Policy* no. 19 (Summer 1975): 109-23.

[15]Robert Jervis, "Why Nuclear Superiority Doesn't Matter," *Political Science Quarterly*, 94 (4) (Winter 1979-80): 630.

[16]See Benjamin S. Lambeth, "The Political Potential of Soviet Equivalence," *International Security*, 4 (2) (Fall 1979): 22-39.

[17]An excellent presentation of this important point is given by Robert Legvold in "Strategic 'Doctrine' and SALT: Soviet and American Views," *Survival*, 21 (1) (January/February 1979): 8-13.

[18]See Lambeth, "The Political Potential of Soviet Equivalence," passim.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[19]The unclassified literature on U.S. nuclear targeting policy is almost pathetically thin. My recent contributions include "Nuclear Strategy: The Case for a Theory of Victory," *International Security*, 4 (1) (Summer 1979): 54-87; and "Targeting Problems for Central War," *Naval War College Review*, 33 (1) (January-February 1980): 3-21. For a very different, but useful, perspective, see William H. Kincade, "A Strategy for All Seasons: Targeting Doctrine and Strategic Arms Control," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 34 (5) (May 1978): 14-20.

[20]See Brown, *Department of Defense Annual Report, FY 1981*, p. 65.

[21]Ibid., pp. 82-3.

[22]See Booth: *Strategy and Ethnocentrism*; and "American Strategy: The Myths Revisited," in *American Thinking about Peace and War*, Booth and Moorhead Wright (eds.) (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 1-35. Also useful is Matthew P. Gallagher and Karl F. Spielmann, *Soviet Decision-Making for Defense: A Critique of U.S. Perspectives on the Arms Race* (New York: Praeger, 1972).

[23]Bernard Brodie, *The Absolute Weapon* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1946).

[24]See Henry S. Rowen, "Formulating Strategic Doctrine," in *Commission on the Organization for the Conduct of Foreign Policy*, vol. 4, Appendix K (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. 219-34.

[25]Leon Sigal, "Rethinking The Unthinkable," *Foreign Policy*, no. 34 (Spring 1979): 39.

[26]Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, 57 (5) (Summer 1979): 983.

[27]Notwithstanding the retrospective wisdom that claims, with strict accuracy, that "they [SALT I and SALT II] did not create the problem of Minuteman survivability and cannot be expected to cure it" (Secretary Brown, in U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *The SALT II Treaty, Hearings*, Part 1, 96th Congress, 2d session [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979], p. 159), the historical record shows quite unambiguously that SALT I was advertised, officially, in 1972, as imposing important constraints on Soviet "light" missile programs. "The SS-19 problem," as it is known, entailed some mix of U.S. official incompetence, dishonesty, and cowardice. See David S. Sullivan, *Soviet SALT Deception* (Boston: The Coalition for Peace Through Strength, 1979), pp. 1-3.

[28]See Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky, "The Mutual Hostage Relationship between America and Russia," *Foreign Affairs*, 52 (1) (October 1973): 109-18.

[29]See Alain Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, *How Much Is Enough? Shaping the Defense Program, 1961-1969* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), chapters 5-6.

[30]"Kissinger Looks at Future of NATO," *Congressional Record*, September 6, 1979, p. E4292.

[31]These ideas are developed in Gray and Payne, "Victory Is Possible."

[32]Richard Pipes, "A Reply," to Wladislaw G. Krasnow, "Anti-Soviet or Anti-Russian?" *Encounter*, 54 (4) (April 1980): 67-72. Pipe's reply is on pp. 72-75.

[33]See Richard Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," *Commentary*, 64 (1) (July 1977): 21-34.

[34]See Lambeth, "The Political Potential of Soviet Equivalence"; and Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., and Amoretta M. Hoeber, *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979). For a usefully skeptical view, see Karl F. Spielmann, *The Political Utility of Strategic Superiority: A Preliminary Investigation into the Soviet View*, IDA Paper P-1349 (Arlington, Va.: Institute for Defense Analyses, May 1979). Still more skeptical is Robert L. Arnett, "Soviet Attitudes towards Nuclear War: Do They Really Think They Can Win?" *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2 (2) (September 1979): 172-91.

[35]I am attracted to the merit of the following judgment offered by Benjamin Lambeth: "It would probably not be overly facetious to suggest that for Soviet military planners, the favored measure of strategic sufficiency is the notion that 'too much is not enough.' " *How To Think About Soviet Military Doctrine*, P-5939 (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, February 1978), p. 7.

[36]See Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (New York: Scribner's, 1974), chapter 1; and Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartland, Rimlands, and the Technological Revolution* (New York: Crane, Russak [for the National Strategy Information Center], 1977), chapter 3.

[37]Joseph Stalin (speech in 1931), quoted in Arthur J. Alexander, *Decision-Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement, Adelphi Papers* nos. 147-148 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Winter 1978/9), p. 2.

[38]Ibid., passim. See also Karl F. Spielmann, *Analyzing Soviet Strategic Arms Decisions* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1978).

[39]These allegations are presented and defended in detail in Gray, "Nuclear Strategy: The Case for a Theory of Victory"; and Gray and Payne, "Victory Is Possible."

[40]See Douglass and Hoeber, *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War*.

[41]See Johan J. Holst, "Strategic Arms Control and Stability: A Retrospective Look," in *Why ABM? Policy Issues in the Missile Defense Controversy*, Holst and William Schneider, Jr. (eds.) (New York: Pergamon, 1969), chapter 12.

[42]Such capabilities discourage adventure on the part of the imperialists.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[43]See Jerome Wiesner, "The Cold War is Dead, but the Arms Race Rumbles On," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* 23 (6) (June 1967): 6-9; and George W. Rathjens, "The Dynamics of the Arms Race," *Scientific American,* 220 (4) (April 1969): 15-25.

[44]See Lawrence Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat* (London: Macmillan 1977), passim.

[45]Bernard Brodie, *Sea Power in the Machine Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), pp. 252-46. This is a modest expansion of Brodie's point but is faithful to his plain meaning.

[46]I have challenged that theory at some length in *The Soviet-American Arms Race* (Farmborough, Hampshire, England: Saxon House, 1976).

[47]Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 234.

[48]Ibid., p. 236.

[49]Robert Jervis, "Why Nuclear Superiority Doesn't Matter," p. 622.

[50]Nicholar Spykman, *America's Strategy in World Politics: The United States and the Balance of Power* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1970, first pub. 1942), p. 21.

[51]Kahan, *Security in the Nuclear Age,* p. 272.

[52]Ibid., p. 273.

[53]Note the judgment on this point in Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," pp. 982-3, 985-6.

[54]John Steinbruner, "National Security and the Concept of Strategic Stability," p. 417.

[55]Ibid., p. 422.

[56]John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), p. 9.

[57]See Erickson, "The Soviet Military System," pp. 28-29.

[58]"Arms Control and Soviet Strategic Forces: The Risks of Asking SALT to Do Too Much," *The Washington Review of Strategic and International Studies,* 1 (1) (January 1978): p. 22.

[59]The title of chapter 9 in Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict.*

[60]Brown, *Department of Defense Annual Report, FY 1981,* p. 69.

[61]Notwithstanding the enormous significance that the Soviets attach to the surprise disruptive/disarming blow, their operational practices vis à vis their strategic forces have never approached the day-in, day-out instant readiness ethos of SAC and the U.S. SSBN force.

[62]*Department of Defense Annual Report, FY 1981,* pp. 65-68, 85-88.

[63]Damage limitation on a major scale is very far indeed from the desiderata of Harold Brown's Department of Defense. See Brown, *Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1979* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 2, 1978), p. 65. By way of contrast, a very useful discussion of the Soviet approach to damage limitation is Daniel Goure and Gordon H. McCormic, "Soviet Strategic Defense: The Neglected Dimension of the U.S.-Soviet Balance," *Orbis,* 24 (1) (Spring 1980): 103-27.

[64]For a strong statement to this effect from a highly credible source, see *Congressional Record,* "Kissinger Looks at Future of NATO."

[65]I have explored this thesis in some detail in "Targeting Problems for Central War."

[66]Some U.S. commentators believe that they should be evenhanded in their prescriptions between the United States and the Soviet Union. Victor Utgoff of the NSC staff, for example, in a speech before the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in Monterey, California, February 1, 1978, argued to the effect that the United States could not be trusted not to abuse a strategically superior position.

[67]See Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War."

[68]Useful background is provided in Henry C. Rowen, "The Evolution of Strategic Nuclear Doctrine," in *Strategic Thought in the Nuclear Age,* Laurence Martin (ed.) (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), pp. 131-56.

[69]*Department of Defense Annual Report, FY 1981,* pp. 66, 67, 86.

[70]See Colin S. Gray, "Ballistic Missile Defense: A New Debate for a New Decade," *International Security,* forthcoming.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JAN M. LODAL

Deterrence and Nuclear Strategy

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE NUCLEAR AGE, the United States has treated nuclear weapons as inherently different from other weapons. The overwhelming destructive capability of nuclear weapons, combined with the near-impossibility of mounting an adequate defense against them, have left deterrence of attack as the primary mission of these weapons. Bernard Brodie articulated this in 1946: "If [a nation that proposes to launch an attack] must fear retaliation, the fact that it destroys its opponent's cities some hours or even days before its own are destroyed may avail it little. Thus far, the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them."[1]

The role of deterrence in military strategy did not emerge with the advent of nuclear weapons. It has always been understood that by maintaining a strong war-fighting capability, a nation deters potential aggressors. But the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons is based only partially on their war-fighting capability. Nuclear weapons deter attack also through their unique capability to destroy the attacker's entire society in retaliation. Since no conceivable objective is worth such a loss, the risk of a nuclear response is a powerful deterrent to the use of these weapons.

Through the 1950s "massive retaliation" was the U.S. strategy for dealing with the Soviet military threat. Given the nuclear superiority of the United States at the time, the threat of nuclear retaliation was credible enough to deter not only any Soviet attack on the U.S. mainland, but in Europe as well. In Europe it was not necessary to strike Soviet cities and risk loss of our own cities to counter an invasion; we could retaliate with nuclear weapons against the invasion itself.

It is notable that during these years, when the United States possessed a clear nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, America never pursued the option of striking first in a preventive war. To use nuclear weapons to carry out an offensive military operation, even with clear superiority, was largely unthinkable. In Korea, despite the political and military setbacks our strategy of limited conventional war bought about, the United States still chose not to use nuclear weapons.

By the beginning of the 1960s, U.S. ability to stop a Soviet invasion of Europe by targeting Soviet forces was no longer clear-cut. The Soviets had developed enough nuclear capability to match the threatened use of nuclear weapons

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

against their forces in a European war. The United States could still threaten to stop a Soviet attack with nuclear weapons, but the Soviets could now respond in kind. A U.S. threat to escalate immediately to an all-out strategic attack on the Soviet Union had lost much of its credibility, since any such attack would result in the destruction of American cities. This situation led to the doctrine of "flexible response" and a consequent buildup in our deployment of smaller "battlefield" nuclear weapons.

The doctrine of flexible response pushed nuclear strategy closer to the traditional military thinking—that maintaining a superior overall military capability provides the best possible deterrent. Through flexible response, deterrence was now tied to war-fighting capability. Flexible response added another important aspect to U.S. strategy: the requirement that the West maintain an adequate conventional defense capability against Soviet conventional attacks. Soviet nuclear capability had made our threat to respond to conventional attacks with nuclear weapons less credible.

The 1960s also saw the advent of "damage limiting" as a part of U.S. nuclear strategy. The emerging technical feasibility of an antiballistic missile defense (ABM), combined with an increased capability to destroy Soviet forces before they could be launched, led to the doctrine that we ought to maintain a capability to limit to the greatest extent possible the damage to the United States that would follow if a nuclear war did occur.

Unfortunately, damage limiting proved to be largely impossible technologically, and the doctrine quickly gave way to "mutual assured destruction." By the mid-1960s, the Soviets had obtained their own assured destruction capability: they could destroy U.S. society even after absorbing an all-out counterforce attack on their forces and penetrating our strategic defenses. A counterforce attack might destroy many Soviet weapons, but it could not reduce significantly the Soviet capability to destroy U.S. forces or cities. This was particularly true if the Soviets struck first.

Counterforce capabilities, as well as active and passive defense, came to be seen by many as not only ineffective, but even possibly harmful. In a crisis the Soviets might believe that their assured destruction capability was threatened by U.S. counterforce; this might lead them to launch an attack preemptively rather than risk losing their forces as the consequence of an American first strike. Thus, counterforce and defenses, it was argued, might actually increase the risk of nuclear war rather than help deter it.

This view, however, did not predominate. Although counterforce ceased to be pursued actively in its own right, the total counterforce capability of U.S. forces increased steadily, principally through improved missile accuracy. Counterforce strikes remained an essential element in strategic war operations plans, and have always figured as the only planned use of America's numerous "tactical" nuclear weapons.

In his most recent annual report to the Congress, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown described current U.S. nuclear strategy. He called his policy "Deterrence—The Countervailing Strategy," and said: "We need first of all, survivable and enduring retaliatory capability to devastate the industry and cities of the Soviet Union. . . . What has come to be known as assured destruction is the bedrock of nuclear deterrence, and we will retain such capability in the future."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But assured destruction is not "sufficient in itself as a strategic doctrine. . . . If deterrence is to be fully effective, the United States must be able to respond at a level appropriate to the type and scale of a Soviet attack."[2]

Secretary Brown's statement confirmed that a flexible response capability remained a key element of U.S. strategy. Insisting that his statement did not indicate a change, he said:

> In certain respects, the name is newer than the strategy. The need for flexibility in calibrating U.S. retaliation to the provocation is not, of course, a new discovery, whatever interpretation may have been placed on general statements of prior doctrines. It has never been U.S. policy to limit ourselves to massive counter-city options in retaliation, nor have our plans been so circumscribed. For nearly 20 years, we have explicitly included a range of employment options—against military as well as nonmilitary targets—in our strategic employment planning.[3]

The Need for Strategic Revision

The nuclear strategy of the United States remains to this day essentially the same as the one worked out during the Kennedy Administration, and, indeed, is not very different from that adopted at the very beginning of the nuclear age. Its basic postulate is simple: the threat of retaliation must be on a scale adequate to deter potential Soviet attack.

One might imagine that a strategy that has changed so little after so many years would need little revision. Yet, the calls for revision are in fact growing all the time and becoming increasingly insistent. Only recently Henry Kissinger wrote: "Achieving a more discriminating nuclear strategy, preserving at least some hope for civilized life, remains to this day one of the most difficult tasks to implement, requiring a substantial recasting of our military establishment. If unsolved, the problem will sooner or later paralyze our strategy and our foreign policy."[4] That Kissinger could have made such a statement—given the positions he held for eight years, and the influence he exercised during that time—suggests how difficult and frustrating a problem it is.

Mr. Kissinger is arguing a theme that is becoming increasingly common in numerous of the current criticisms of U.S. strategic policy; he is saying quite boldly that the doctrine of assured destruction, which Harold Brown says "is the bedrock of nuclear deterrence," lacks credibility. These criticisms are being heard because there have been two fundamental changes in the environment in which U.S. nuclear strategy is required to operate. First, the invulnerability of U.S. strategic forces to Soviet attack is being seriously challenged precisely because the Soviet ability to attack our Minuteman missile forces is growing. This new vulnerability threatens the American ability to launch an effective retaliatory strike and, hence, to deter a direct attack on the United States. Second, "extended deterrence" (the existence of a nuclear umbrella deterring a Soviet attack on Western Europe or other areas of strategic interest to the United States) has lost much of its strength. The Soviet achievement of nuclear parity has reduced the credibility of Western threats to use nuclear weapons first, while the buildup in Soviet conventional capabilities has led to a greater demand on extended deterrence than ever before. The Soviets now have conventional forces in Europe adequate to mount an effective conventional attack, and their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

expanded force projection capabilities give them conventional attack options in other theaters as well.

The growing vulnerability of U.S. land-based missile forces has been the most directly visible cause of calls to reassess our strategy. Four years ago, Paul Nitze set the framework for this debate.[5] Nitze's argument was not that land-based missile vulnerability eliminated America's capability to retaliate against Soviet cities; rather, that this vulnerability presented a target of opportunity to the Soviets in a crisis. They could destroy U.S. land-based missiles, eliminating a significant portion of our strategic force while retaining a massive force of their own, and leaving us with little option other than attacking their cities—a step we were not likely to take if it simply meant that our own cities were destroyed in return.

Those who have argued the importance of this military situation have generally proposed one of two responses. The first would be to eliminate the vulnerability of our land-based missiles by deploying them in a mobile mode (or, alternatively, moving them out to sea). The other would be to deploy large land-based missiles that would be able to threaten the Soviet land-based force in much the same way they threaten ours. The merits of each approach is a proper subject of debate; neither, however, responds fully to the combination of political, military, and diplomatic problems that confront this country today. Furthermore, for the time being, the argument over which approach is best is moot. The MX system being deployed achieves both objectives—survival through mobility, together with a major increase in U.S. antisilo counterforce capability.

The erosion of "extended deterrence" has brought out equally strong calls for strategic revision. The United States and its NATO allies have maintained a significant conventional defense capability for twenty years, so the need for extended deterrence has never been acute. Yet, because Western conventional defenses have major weaknesses, the ability to threaten nuclear war contributes importantly to Western security. But the critics say that in the face of Soviet nuclear parity, for the West to use nuclear weapons to retaliate against a Soviet conventional invasion would simply lead to its own destruction by Soviet nuclear forces. This being the situation, the argument continues, it is clear that an American president would be unwilling to take the risk; the deterrent value of the threat of retaliation is thereby greatly reduced.

As with land-based missile vulnerability, critics have suggested alternative approaches for coping with the problems of eroding extended deterrence. The first would involve a major change in strategy, with the West improving its conventional forces so substantially as no longer to be dependent on nuclear deterrence. The second would be to continue a significant reliance on nuclear deterrence, improving the nuclear war-fighting capability of our forces in order to enhance the credibility of our threat to use them.

Some critics who have called for a revision of strategy have offered political rather than military arguments. Their concern has been overwhelmingly with the way in which American power is perceived in the world. In the aftermath of Watergate and Vietnam, and in the context of continuous and growing Soviet force deployments with falling Western deployments, American guarantees to defend its allies and its vital interests seem to have lost much of their credibility throughout the world.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Certain arguments about the importance of perceptions of relative strength focus principally on numerical indicators. They suggest that the Soviets will gain geopolitical advantages with their numerically superior strategic forces, irrespective of whether the United States retains its ability to withstand a Soviet attack and retaliate, and irrespective of whether the American people are prepared to fight a nuclear war forced upon them. These critics insist that our strategy ought to change to one that involves maintaining forces equal in overall size and military capability to those of the Soviets.

In my view, a much more telling critique of the West's inattention of the political aspects of nuclear strategy is given by Michael Howard in his brilliant article "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy." In this article, Howard argues that the West has treated nuclear war almost exclusively as a technological phenomenon, largely ignoring the societal dimension of strategy. Any effective strategy must incorporate four key aspects—operational, logistical, technological, and social—the latter being the attitude, social cohesion, and popular passions of the people whose commitment and readiness to sacrifice often determine the successful outcome of war. "The maintenance of adequate armed forces in peacetime, and the will to deploy and support them operationally in war, is in fact a symbol of that social unity and political resolve which is as essential an element in nuclear deterrence as any invulnerable second-strike capability."[6]

The West has paid little attention to the operational and logistical dimensions of nuclear war, in sharp contrast to the Soviets, whose interest in these matters, Howard says, is "no more than common sense. If such a war does occur, the operational and logistical problems it will pose will need to have been thoroughly thought through. . . . The belief that technology has somehow eliminated the need for operational effectiveness is, in short, no more likely to be valid in the nuclear age than it was in the second world war."[7]

In the end, Howard argues that no nuclear strategy alone can be fully effective; it must be supplemented by commitment to a strong conventional capability.

> If we do take account of the social dimension of strategy in the nuclear age, we are likely to conclude that Western leaders might find it much more difficult to initiate nuclear war than would their Soviet counterparts and, more important, would be perceived by their adversaries as finding it more difficult. If this is the case, and if on their side the conventional strength of the Soviet armed forces makes it unnecessary for their leaders to take such an initiative, the operational effectiveness of the armed forces of the West once more becomes a matter of major strategic importance, both in deterrence and in defense.[8]

Howard, in arguing that perceptions of power matter in deterrence, insists that these perceptions are based on something more than a comparison of military establishments.

> Such credibility depends not simply on a perceived balance, or imbalance, of weapons systems, but on perceptions of the nature of the society whose leaders are threatening such retaliation. Peoples who are not prepared to make the effort necessary for operational defense are even less likely to support a decision to initiate a nuclear exchange from which they will themselves suffer almost inconceivable de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

struction, even if that decision is taken at the lowest possible level of nuclear escalation.[9]

Is it instructive to contrast Howard's criticisms with those of Henry Kissinger. Both argue strongly that our present inattention to the operational aspects of warfare reduce significantly the effectiveness of our deterrent force. Kissinger, however, leaves himself with an almost impossible dilemma. He insists that it is essential to develop a nuclear strategy and doctrine that will permit our nuclear forces to play a major role in deterring Soviet conventional attack, because of "the political impossibility of raising adequate conventional forces." He states that while he was in office "it was a counsel of defeat to abjure both strategic and tactical nuclear forces, for no NATO country—including ours—was prepared to undertake the massive buildup in conventional forces that was the sole alternative."[10] But he suggests no way in which the threat to use nuclear weapons first, against an adversary who can respond in kind, can be made credible enough to reduce the need for the conventional defense he says is politically impossible. This is especially true in Europe where civilian fatalities would be massive.

Kissinger and Howard perform a considerable service in reminding us of the ultimate Clausewitzian truth that all military activities are driven by political objectives. It is well to remember that the principal threat of Soviet foreign policy—to fragment the Western alliance, thereby threatening our liberties—is a much more plausible threat than that of a direct Soviet military attack. Much of our nuclear strategy ought to be focused on maintaining the political unity of the West.

This is not to suggest that military considerations should be ignored. The rational answer to the question of how to restore deterrence is clear: the West faces serious danger if it cannot summon the resolve to mount an adequate conventional defense. No amount of nuclear war preparation, whether it be restructuring limited nuclear options, planning for the survival of troops on a nuclear battlefield, or developing more precise tactical nuclear command and control, can change the fundamental fact that nuclear war, especially in Europe, would be a catastrophe for the societies involved. It would be difficult for any president to initiate such a war, no matter how well "prepared" the West appeared to be. Because the Soviet leaders know this, it remains exceedingly dangerous to rely on the threat of nuclear retaliation to deter attacks other than the most unlikely one—a large direct Soviet nuclear attack.

But Kissinger points to the true dilemma by asserting, correctly, in my view, that a fully adequate conventional defense is simply not feasible politically. The West today has large and capable conventional forces and will undoubtedly seek to improve them. Nuclear weapons, however, will have to continue to carry a significant share of the burden of deterring Soviet attack. If we are to maintain the credibility of our nuclear deterrent, we must devise a strategy that provides for the worst possible scenario—to fight and survive a nuclear war, no matter how grim the prospects.

The Alternative of Arms Control

One solution to the shortcomings of our present strategy would be to negotiate an accommodation between the Soviet Union and the West that would re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

duce the danger of nuclear war to an acceptable level. It ought to be in the interest of both sides to reach such an agreement.

Arms control has played a major role in U.S. strategic thinking since the inception of the nuclear age. A year before Hiroshima, Vannevar Bush and James Conant, scientists associated with the Manhattan Project, suggested to Secretary of War Henry Stimson that after the war's end atomic weapons should be placed in the hands of an international agency.[11] Two years later the Baruch Plan, calling for the placement of all atomic weapon production capability in the hands of a United Nations agency, became official U.S. policy. Both efforts failed, but the attempt to control arms continued. The focus in the 1950s and early 1960s was on nuclear testing—efforts that culminated in the first truly successful arms control agreement, the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963.

Serious arms control efforts resumed in 1968 at the Glassboro Summit between President Johnson and Prime Minister Kosygin. By this time each side had considerable nuclear arsenals; the elimination of nuclear weapons became at best a distant objective. Even the prospect of eliminating all nuclear weapons testing seemed less important; the two sides seemed comfortable with the limited test ban treaty, restricting testing to underground detonations. The objective of arms control had changed once again, becoming principally an effort to negotiate stable mutual deterrence between the two superpowers.

At Glassboro, the United States introduced the idea of a mutual ban on antiballistic missile defense; defenses were seen as the greatest potential threat to mutual assured destruction. The invasion of Czechoslovakia intervened, however, and formal talks did not get underway again until Richard Nixon took office.

In November 1969 these negotiations began in Helsinki. The objective remained essentially what it had been in Glassboro: to negotiate a permanent mutual assured destruction regime with the Soviet Union. Each side was to be permitted adequate offensive forces capable of destroying the other's society in retaliation, even following an all-out attack on its own nuclear arsenal. Antiballistic missile defenses were to be severely limited or prohibited, ensuring that there would be no effective defense against a retaliatory blow.

Many in the United States believed that if this objective could be achieved through negotiation, the nuclear arms race could be halted. With the two sides holding each other hostage, stability would be achieved, and the risk of nuclear war would become minimal.

U.S. arms control efforts have always been intertwined with the theory of deterrence. The creation of a stable mutual assured destruction regime remains to this day a major U.S. arms control objective. The only SALT agreement remaining officially in force today is the ABM treaty, which effectively prohibits ABMs on both sides. The unratified SALT II treaty represents a further American attempt to codify mutual assured destruction by putting a ceiling on Soviet capability to threaten U.S. retaliatory forces.

While the codification of mutual assured destruction has been the most visible objective of the SALT process, SALT has had a broader objective as well—"to create the conditions for political restraint without which escalating crises were inevitable."[12] SALT, inherently a political exercise, was inextricably woven into a larger policy of reaching détente with the Soviet Union. Thus, a successful SALT agreement was expected to play an important role in enhancing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extended deterrence as well as in controlling the threat to assured destruction. A SALT treaty that facilitated a détente relationship, leading to Soviet restraint in building up its conventional force capabilities, was intended to reduce the need to rely on nuclear weapons to deter conventional Soviet attacks.

It is precisely in the area of conventional forces that détente has been most obviously a failure. The ABM treaty went a long way toward codifying a mutual assured destruction relationship between the two sides. What was not achieved, however, was restraint in the buildup of Soviet conventional forces or any meaningful control of Soviet geopolitical adventurism.

In the wake of the Soviets' Afghanistan invasion, the ratification of SALT II now seems remote; the early completion of major new agreements would appear to be almost inconceivable. We must begin to look beyond arms control for solutions to the problems of ensuring a credible deterrence during the 1980s.

The failure of SALT to stabilize the military balance between the West and the Soviet Union is indicative of a larger breakdown in the political structure that has supported our security posture. Some of this breakdown has been inevitable as the rest of the world recovered from World War II, and some has certainly resulted from mistakes made by successive U.S. leaders. Regardless of who is to blame, the fact is that U.S. assurances to its allies are no longer enough to secure political solidarity. We must devise new doctrines and programs around which the Western nations can rally. These doctrines and programs must be new because existing approaches, while not necessarily flawed, are inadequate. They have not succeeded in generating either the internal social cohesion or the alliance solidarity required to ensure our security.

Enhancing the Role of Nuclear War-fighting

One alternative is to rely more heavily on the traditional deterrence associated with maintaining a superior war-fighting force. The precise role of war-fighting capabilities in our strategic doctrine could range from the use of battlefield weapons, through planned launching of a limited attack with strategic forces, to an extreme of maintaining "escalation dominance"—the ability to respond in kind to any enemy escalation and to maintain a superior position after the response. To date, the United States has never articulated a detailed policy with respect to war-fighting capabilities.[13] What it has done is to insist that it retains a capability to respond with less than all-out attacks, while making no clear effort to develop a full-fledged "escalation dominance" posture.

In my view, there is little reason to abandon the inherent ambiguity of this policy. Moving to either extreme—a doctrine that excludes all limited war options or one of complete escalation dominance—makes little sense. The absence of a limited strategic option would leave us only a strategy of massive retaliation—rejected in 1961 for reasons that if correct then, are ten times more convincing today. At the other extreme, it is difficult to see the advantage of escalation dominance. To begin with, the Soviets would certainly not permit this to occur. But even if they failed to respond, it is not clear what such a capability would add to the deterrent effect of our forces. Our present doctrine permits us to respond in kind to any Soviet attack up to a very high level of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

violence.[14] The revised doctrine would be relevant only for massive attacks, which would undoubtedly involve such a large scale of damage, that an all-out nuclear exchange would be inevitable. Small wars may not be credibly deterred by assured destruction. But it is difficult to find any rationale for fine distinctions about the doctrine associated with large-scale nuclear exchanges; in all cases, the damage would be immense and the deterrent credible.

Forces designed for escalation dominance are unlikely to differ greatly from forces designed for counterforce attacks. But the two operational capabilities differ nonetheless. Thus, the role of counterforce in our strategic doctrine deserves separate consideration.

U.S. forces contain a significant counterforce capability even today, particularly if we consider U.S. capability against Soviet submarines and bombers in addition to the more frequently discussed attacks against land-based missiles. But much of our counterforce capability is essentially incidental to other objectives. Bomber and submarine bases are soft and easy to target, and antisubmarine warfare (ASW) against ballistic missile submarines is not different from ASW against attack submarines. The only U.S. weapon designed explicitly for counterforce is the Mark 12-A warhead on the Minuteman III, and a new warhead on an existing missile can hardly be seen as a major commitment to counterforce. Nevertheless, given the counterforce capability inherent in our present force, the only serious question is whether we should obtain an ability to destroy the Soviets' land-based missile force, since it is only here that we could materially increase our capabilities.

There are several arguments in favor of developing an all-out counterforce capability against land-based missile silos. First, such a capability would eliminate any potential advantage, no matter how small, the Soviets might obtain from the unilateral antisilo capability they are now deploying. Second, a U.S. antisilo capability might well induce the Soviets to negotiate mutual reductions in counterforce weapons, since the Soviets are much more heavily dependent upon land-based ICBMs than is the United States: if the United States had a major counterforce capability against these ICBMs, perhaps the Soviets would see the advantage of avoiding all-out counterforce capabilities on both sides. Third, a U.S. counterforce capability comparable to that of the Soviets would ensure against possible adverse political perceptions other nations might have if we allow the Soviets to have a unilateral counterforce capability. No matter how cogent the argument that Soviet counterforce weapons confer no real military advantage, political leaders throughout the world are unlikely to agree. Rather, they will react in more traditional military terms, concluding that the Soviet preponderance of raw military force would eventually prevail. A U.S. move to deploy new counterforce weapons would eliminate this reaction. It would be seen as an indication of improved social cohesion and national will, demonstrating a healthy and growing attention to these aspects of strategy.

Of the few technological obstacles to U.S. development of an antisilo counterforce capability, a major one is not often discussed: the inability to fully test antisilo attacks in operational conditions. There is great uncertainty concerning the actual operational reliability of counterforce systems owing to the large number of interfaces among the systems and the many physical effects that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

might affect the operations of the systems. But it is possible to deploy weapons with the necessary combination of accuracy and yield to permit the destruction of ICBM silos, at least on paper.

It is important that any U.S. weapons system intended to provide an antisilo capability be able to survive Soviet attack. Nonsurvivable counterforce weapons would increase the incentive for the Soviets to strike preemptively. This "crisis stability" problem is heightened by the Soviet dependence on land-based missiles; they might be faced with the threat of losing the majority of their forces unless they opted to preempt.

While a careful analysis requires an increase in survivable counterforce capability, it does not require a change in U.S. strategic programs. Current U.S. doctrine is not explicit concerning antisilo counterforce capabilities, but our force structure decision is clear: we intend to deploy a survivable counterforce capability in the form of the MX missile based in a multiple-aimpoint mobile mode. The same conclusion holds with respect to other aspects of nuclear war-fighting, such as the development of war plans for limited use of nuclear forces. Brown's statement (quoted earlier) that such options are already a part of U.S. war plans could not be clearer.[15] Furthermore, it is often forgotten that the majority of America's nuclear weapons, the tactical battlefield weapons, have as their only mission "war-fighting."

Nuclear war-fighting thus is not likely to be a fruitful area to find major initiatives that would enhance deterrence. A much more important practical alternative to present nuclear doctrine and deployments is the pursuit of strategic defense, both active (ABM and air defense) and passive (civil defense).

The Absence of Defense in U.S. Nuclear Strategy

Strategic defense is completely absent from U.S. nuclear strategy. There is no reference to defense in published statements of strategy, and the United States maintains no effective defense against Soviet attack. Our air defenses are limited, and the single Safeguard site permitted by the ABM treaty is mothballed. Nor do we have a significant civil defense program.

More than any other reason, the technical difficulty of constructing an airtight strategic defense has led to the absence of defenses in U.S. strategy. The overwhelmingly destructive capacity of nuclear weapons makes it almost impossible to defend against them. No defense in the history of warfare has been impenetrable. A few men or a few weapons could always get through, but the defender could usually survive such infiltration. Nuclear weapons change this. Any penetrating weapons at all, if aimed at cities, would lead to unacceptable damage.

To be fully effective in defending American cities, U.S. strategic defense must be able to:

- Prevent penetration of six thousand Soviet missile warheads
- Stop massed attacks against the defense components themselves
- Stop attacks from almost any aximuth, since Soviet long-range SLBMs could attack from any ocean
- Stop Soviet bombers, whether high-altitude, low-flying, subsonic, or supersonic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

- Work against a variety of countermeasures, including penetration aids, maneuvering reentry vehicles, air-to-surface missiles, and so forth.

The difficulty of mounting an airtight defense is exacerbated by the fact that penetration of only a few weapons aimed at the defenses themselves would destroy the defense, allowing the remaining Soviet weapons to penetrate freely. Furthermore, the impossibility of testing a strategic defense in an operational situation means that a high degree of confidence in its reliability is unlikely, even if all the technology appeared to be perfect. Thus the United States has rejected deployment of a full-scale city-protection strategic defense capability. The technological difficulties will not be overcome in this century.

This fundamental technological fact led Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to resist pressures to deploy a full-scale NIKE X defense throughout the 1960s. But McNamara had a second reason: he believed strongly that the deployment of ABMs by the two countries would lead to an action-reaction arms race as each side increased its offensive forces to ensure penetration of the other's defense. Even though many technical problems made construction of an airtight defense impossible, neither side would accept any significant risk that the defense might work. McNamara felt this action-reaction effect was so nearly inevitable that it was crucial for the two sides to agree through negotiation to forgo large ABM systems.

An impenetrable shield was impossible, but a limited defense was clearly seen to have some utility, even by McNamara. It would provide a hedge against accidental attacks, and it could be used effectively against the relatively small nuclear capability then emerging in China. At the same time, a light defense would not effectively threaten the deterrent capability of either side, since the existing large strategic forces could penetrate easily.

Of course, the situation wasn't quite this simple, because a limited defense could be expanded fairly rapidly. Given the long lead times of strategic weapons deployment, one worry was that the deployment of a light defense would lead to an excessive buildup in the other side's offensive weapons, because the defender could not be relied on to stop his deployments at low levels. By 1967 this phenomenon had already begun, with the United States developing MIRVs as a response to the very small Soviet Galosh ABM and the slight chance that the SA-5 Tallin system might have some ABM capability.

Mr. McNamara and President Johnson resolved the dilemma by announcing in 1967 deployment of the Sentinel ABM system, using the rationale of defending against a Chinese attack. Upon entering office President Nixon ordered a thorough review of this decision, but ratified it with few changes. The name was changed to Safeguard, and the mission was eventually restated to focus not on defense against Chinese attack, since no real Chinese threat was apparent, but rather toward defense of U.S. strategic forces—particularly our Minuteman missiles, which were beginning to be threatened by the Soviet SS-9 missile: Safeguard radars were also reoriented toward the sea to permit some protection of U.S. bomber bases against Soviet SLBM attacks.

In the anti-Pentagon atmosphere of 1969 the Safeguard system was almost defeated by Congress; it survived by one vote. But two and one-half years later the effort was effectively abandoned after all, as a result of the SALT I ABM treaty with the Soviet Union.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the end, the U.S. agreement to limit ABMs reflected a belief that by institutionalizing assured destruction through the SALT process, deterrence would be stabilized and the world made relatively safe from nuclear war. Before MIRVs, ABM defenses were the greatest potential threat to assured destruction. However, it is important to remember that the U.S. government did not believe that Safeguard, and before it Sentinel, were destabilizing threats to mutual assured destruction, although some nongovernment critics certainly did. The low ABM limits agreed to in SALT I reflected not so much a belief that larger deployments would upset the superpower balance, but rather the assumption that with successful negotiation mutual deterrence would be assured and defenses would be unnecessary.

The Alternative of a Limited Active Defense

Although an effective antiballistic missile defense of American cities against a large-scale Soviet attack will not be technically feasible in the foreseeable future, this does not mean that a more limited active defense would be ineffective. In the thirteen years since the Sentinel decision was made, a great deal has changed in ABM technology. The technology on which Sentinel was based has been improved considerably; new technologies and approaches have also emerged. Thus, any defense that the United States might deploy today would differ substantially in its design from both Sentinel and Safeguard.

In discussing limited defense, it is important to distinguish between two major categories of active defenses: hardpoint and area. Hardpoint defenses are designed exclusively to defend hardened military sites, such as missile silos; area defenses are intended to defend unprotected large areas, such as cities. Hardpoint defenses are easier to construct technologically because it is not necessary to intercept an incoming warhead at any great distance from the target. Since a warhead must detonate within a few thousand feet of a missile silo to destroy it, a hardpoint defense has the option of ignoring warheads falling outside the lethal radius, waiting until the atmosphere has burned off deceptive penetration aids before attacking the remaining warheads. A city, on the other hand, will be destroyed if the warhead lands anywhere near it. An area defense, by definition, must intercept attacking warheads some distance away. Also, a few warheads leaking through a hardpoint defense will destroy only a small part of a dispersed military target such as an ICBM field. A small number of warheads hitting cities and other soft targets (such as bomber bases) will destroy them completely. It is because of this latter phenomenon that airtight area defenses of cities remain unfeasible. But a hardpoint defense could be particularly effective.

Even a light hardpoint defense would be effective if combined with a multiple aimpoint ICBM-basing scheme such as that envisioned for MX. The defensive capability in such circumstances is multiplied through the technique of preferential defense—defending only the shelters actually containing missiles. For example, if each missile is associated with ten shelters, a single ABM interceptor requires ten incoming warheads to overcome it. The Soviets must aim at each of the ten shelters, since the interceptor will be used only against the warhead heading toward the shelter that actually contains the missile.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

While an airtight heavy area defense of cities could not be deployed, a limited area defense could still be of considerable military use. It would add to the effectiveness of a hardpoint defense of land-based missiles, help protect other strategic forces by providing added warning time for bombers on the ground and submarines in port to disperse, give some defense against accidental or "third country" attack, and protect national command authorities for at least the initial few minutes of a war. Thus, both hardpoint and limited area defenses could have clear and immediate military usefulness. Such defenses would increase deterrence both by improving the war-fighting capability of our force and its assured destruction capability.

American deployment of a limited active defense could also restore a measure of credibility for extended deterrence. Such an action would serve well to reinforce both the social and the operational dimensions of Western strategy discussed earlier. A society must demonstrate a willingness to carry out the threat it relies on for its security; the deployment of an active defense would indicate a greatly increased level of preparation for the unlikely event of nuclear war. More important, perhaps, the deployment of defenses might appear considerably more sensible to many Americans than restoring the draft or continuing to build yet more offensive nuclear systems. The advantages of even limited defenses would be obvious to American citizens. Finding military programs that attract broad political support is vitally important in demonstrating and creating social cohesion; these results, quite as much as the military and diplomatic consequences of such policies, need to be taken into account.

In an operational sense, an active defense would eliminate any Soviet incentive to carry out "limited" nuclear attacks against U.S. territory, even if the United States had used tactical nuclear weapons to stop a Soviet invasion. The defense would be capable of intercepting a small-scale attack; a Soviet leader would have to launch a large attack (several thousand warheads) to penetrate these defenses. A rational Soviet leader ought to be deterred from launching such an attack, realizing that an assured destruction response is a much more credible reaction to an attack of several thousand warheads than to an attack of a few warheads.

By eliminating the usefulness of limited offensive attacks, a U.S. defense would effectively establish a second "firebreak" in the ladder of escalation. The United States has, for some time now, emphasized the firebreak between conventional and nuclear forces, pointing out that crossing the firebreak would in all likelihood eventuate in an all-out nuclear exchange. This "firebreak effect" helps deter a Soviet first use of nuclear weapons, but it is directly contradictory to NATO's threatened first use of nuclear weapons to stop a Soviet conventional invasion. The firebreak established by a limited nuclear defense would be of a different character. It would make the West's first use of tactical nuclear weapons more credible, since the possibility of a limited Soviet attack on the United States would be virtually eliminated.

Before turning to the major difficulties likely to arise out of a U.S. deployment of ABMs (the effect on SALT and the possible Soviet response), I will touch briefly on the role of civil defense and the composition of a limited ABM system. Any attempt to defend civilian populations against nuclear attack requires at least some civil defense effort to protect against fallout. Furthermore, up to a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

point, civil defense is a much less expensive way than active defense to save lives. Thus it makes sense to increase our civil defense program. But there may well be intense public opposition to civil defense, as there has been in the past. Should it in the end prove desirable to proceed with a limited ABM defense, the political difficulty of mounting an increased civil defense effort should not be allowed to hinder its deployment.

I have left the architecture of this defense system intentionally vague, specifying only that it have some capability to defend land-based missiles and a limited capability to defend U.S. cities and "soft" military installations. Such a defense could be similar in design and size to the original twelve-site Safeguard system, with perhaps an expansion of the number of interceptors up to two to three thousand. But it is not at all clear that, given today's technology, the Safeguard architecture remains the most effective one. In any case, as I suggest in the next section, the detailed architecture of the defense ought to await the results of negotiations with the Soviets.

Soviet Response and the Effect on SALT

When the Sentinel Program was announced in 1967, it generated great concern that the Soviets might see the deployment of a U.S. ABM defense as a threat to their assured destruction capability. Such a threat, it was argued, could be highly destabilizing to the strategic balance, leading even perhaps to a Soviet preemptive strike or, at the very least, to an accelerated arms race.

In 1967 the Soviets were several years from a capability to deploy multiple weapons (MIRVs) on their missiles; thus even the relatively small Sentinel defense would require using their entire ICBM force to exhaust its interceptors. In these circumstances, a strong Soviet reaction to a U.S. deployment could be unexpected.[16]

The Soviets have now deployed several thousand land-based MIRVs and are in the process of deploying MIRVs on their SLBMs as well. Even should the Soviets have to exhaust fully a limited defense to mount an effective assured destruction attack, doing so would use only a fraction of their total force. In no sense would a limited ABM deployed in the 1980s threaten Soviet assured destruction capability.

A closely related issue is the concern that the Soviets might respond to a U.S. ABM with the deployment of a "heavy" defense that would threaten the U.S. assured destruction capability. As recently as 1972, in the debate over the SALT I ABM treaty, a major debate raged concerning the possible ABM capabilities of the rudimentary Tallin air defense system. Current Soviet ABM technology has been improved dramatically over that deployed in Tallin. Thus a Soviet deployment of even a limited defense (say three thousand interceptors) could lead to a major demand for increased U.S. offensive forces. The worry is not so much that these interceptors could not be penetrated—existing MIRVs, even without additional penetration aids, could do so. Rather, the concern would be that the radars and command and control systems associated with the limited defense might permit a "breakout" into a heavy defense through the rapid deployment of additional interceptors.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I find such a scenario implausible. First, any breakout would take a matter of many months and possibly even years to accomplish. During this time a variety of short-term actions could be taken to increase greatly our retaliatory capability, such as putting more strategic bombers on alert or keeping more SLBMs at sea. Additional penetration aids could be deployed rapidly on existing missiles, and some missiles are capable of accepting additional warheads without modification. The Soviets know that these responses are available and would negate their efforts. In the longer term, the cost to the Soviets of deploying additional interceptors to counter a heavy U.S. retaliatory attack would be much greater than the cost to the United States of responding with additional warheads and penetration aids. The Soviets simply could not sustain the economic burden required for such an effort. But, even if they could, the defense would not be effective. It is simply outside the realm of present technology to create a defense that is airtight against simultaneous attack from bombers, cruise missiles, forward-based systems, SLBMs, and land-based ICBMs.

The Soviets would be more likely to respond by deploying only a limited defense that did not threaten America's assured destruction capability. One might still worry that such a deployment would effectively negate the American defense by providing the Soviets with a symmetric capability, making it easier for them also to cross the firebreak and use nuclear weapons first in Europe. But the effect is not symmetric. U.S. strategy is based on defending Europe against a Soviet invasion, while the Soviets face no comparable threat of invasion from the West. Their attack would be offensive, and the Soviets would be foolish to use nuclear weapons first in an offensive operation. To do so would devastate the territory they were attempting to conquer and eliminate any possible political gain from having gone to war. Even if the invasion were stopped by Western conventional forces, the Soviets always have the option of withdrawal, an option they would almost certainly take before resorting to nuclear weapons and all the risk such a move would entail. If the Soviet attack began to succeed, the options for the West would be more stark: either to surrender or to use nuclear weapons.

Whether or not the Soviets responded with a new ABM of their own, the U.S. deployment of active defenses would have a profound effect on the future of arms control. Any significant ABM defense would require either renegotiation of the 1972 ABM treaty or its abrogation under the "Supreme National Interest" clause. In either case, the Soviet Union would protest that the United States is once again violating established agreements and demonstrating an inability to pursue a consistent policy.

But the history of this issue should not be forgotten. During the SALT I negotiations and in the subsequent ratification debate, the United States stated strongly that failure to obtain a permanent treaty limiting offensive weapons would be considered adequate grounds for abrogating the ABM treaty. Not even the temporary SALT II treaty is likely to survive, and no permanent treaty is in prospect. Thus the United States would be on firm procedural ground to reopen the ABM question. This is not to minimize the effect—abrogation of the most significant arms control treaty ever concluded could well change the entire character of future arms control negotiations.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

No immediate change in the ABM treaty is necessary to begin the research and development efforts necessary to prepare for a U.S. ABM deployment. Clearly, it serves no purpose to tamper with the treaty while there remains any possibility of restoring an effective SALT process. But should a deployment decision prove necessary, it would not be unreasonable to expect the Soviets eventually to negotiate seriously on modification of the ABM treaty, agreeing to terms that would permit the carrying out of the type of deployment suggested here. The Soviets would have strong incentives to retain certain limits on ABM deployment levels. While their ABM technology has advanced dramatically in the last decade, they almost certainly realize that the United States is likely to stay ahead of them in this technology. One ought not to assume that a decision by the United States to deploy a limited ABM automatically spells the end of SALT, or even the end of the ABM treaty.

A second arms control consideration relates to the verification of a renegotiated treaty. Once the relatively large radar networks are in place for even a small nationwide ABM, verifying that the system is in fact limited becomes more difficult. This was an issue even with Tallin in 1972. Our verification capabilities have improved somewhat in the interim, but any new Soviet ABM program would include a more capable and larger radar network than those in existence in 1972. Any future attempts to limit defenses severely would clearly be hampered by verification problems.

An indirect arms control effect of developing an active defense capability would be the increased difficulty in negotiating lower limits on the sizes of both sides' missile forces. If ABMs were in place, relatively large MIRVed missile forces would be required to ensure penetration of the defense system. Since there are no foreseeable circumstances in which either side will feel secure without maintaining an assured destruction capability, the ABM would make it unlikely that either side would be interested in negotiating reductions to low levels.

If we are to accept an increased role for active defense in our nuclear strategy, we must be prepared to live with the probability of no more than modest strategic arms control measures throughout the 1980s. But such a result is likely no matter what actions we take. The greatest potential short-term loss would be the existing SALT process itself. But the SALT process, at least as it has been pursued since its inception in 1969, is now effectively ended in any case. There is very little left of a SALT process to lose—even if SALT II is ratified.

The effect of U.S. ABMs on the longer-run possibilities for successful arms control is not so clearly negative. No arms control process will be effective unless a stable political relationship exists between the United States and the Soviet Union. No such relationship exists today, and it cannot exist unless the United States reasserts its strength through development of a credible strategic doctrine, a strong defense program, and a consistent foreign policy. To take no further actions with respect to our strategic forces would demonstrate to the Soviets and the rest of the world our lack of will to maintain a sound defense against an expansionary Soviet regime. We could, of course, respond by adding strategic offensive forces. Yet the continued development of more offensive nuclear weapons serves little demonstrable military or strategic purpose. The change in strategy I have suggested—returning to the development of active defenses—would not suffer this defect. It might set back arms control in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

short run; but the United States would find itself ultimately in a stronger position to negotiate effective limits on nuclear deployment.

European Reaction to American Defenses

Initially, our European allies would understand the benefit of deploying defenses for U.S. retaliatory forces, since this would increase the strength of America's assured destruction capability and increase the credibility of our threat to use our strategic forces in defense of Europe. They would also probably see some advantage in increasing the credibility of our threat to use battlefield nuclear forces in Europe to defend against Soviet attack. But eventually they would be likely to object strongly to the move.

First, the U.S. move would be seen as a further step away from SALT, arms control, and détente. Even President Carter's limited moves in response to the invasion of Afghanistan have met a mixed response in Europe. To the Europeans, and particularly to the West Germans who live next door to Soviet troops and a Soviet-dominated regime, the benefits of détente seem considerably more concrete than they do to most Americans.

Second, they would object to the "decoupling" of the American strategic nuclear guarantee that would probably result. What the Europeans have always truly desired from the United States is a willingness to respond immediately to a Soviet attack with a U.S. strategic nuclear attack on the Soviet Union, leading to an exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union fought outside Europe. That such an exchange would leave Europe intact while the United States and the Soviet Union devastated each other, despite the fact that the war began in Europe, is incomprehensible. But in European eyes, a U.S. defense would make it relatively more likely that a war could be fought in Europe alone, without involving U.S. territory—a result that would be decried as decoupling.

Third, an objection that would come certainly from the French, and quite possibly from the British as well, is that reopening the issue of antiballistic missile defenses would eventually lead to Soviet deployment of such defenses. Such a move would significantly reduce the effectiveness of the British and French independent nuclear forces. British deployment of the MIRVed Trident I missile would alleviate this to a considerable extent, and French technology is advanced enough to ensure that at least some of their missiles would penetrate a Soviet defense. Nonetheless, the effect would be real, and it would be significant.

Despite these inevitable European objections, the deployment of a limited American defense would be healthy for the alliance. No possible strategy can fully satisfy the European countries. Even more than the United States, our European allies continue to look for an easy solution where none exists. An adequate conventional defense is not acceptable because of its cost. Thus all agree that nuclear deterrence must remain the backbone of European defense. But a credible nuclear threat requires undertaking war preparations that European governments do not wish to sustain politically, since these would be seen as placing additional stress on détente and on increasing the chance of war.

Our European allies will also complain that they would be completely unprotected should a war actually occur, while even a limited U.S. defense would

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provide some protection for Americans. This is of course true, but once again, it is unfortunately a fact of life that cannot be overcome. No strategic defense can protect Western Europe from Soviet nuclear attack. Soviet tactical forces carry with them battlefield nuclear weapons that could not be stopped by a strategic defense. The only way to keep Soviet nuclear weapons out of Western Europe is to stop the invasion itself without resorting to nuclear weapons to do so. Of course, the Europeans' refusal to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure this is why there is need for a U.S. defense in the first place.

The Soviet Union has chosen not to exercise restraint in its military buildup, either nuclear or conventional, and they have chosen to push the expansion of their geopolitical influence and control to the limit. Western society, and our European allies most specifically, must choose among difficult alternatives. American offensive nuclear forces can be increased, and if present programs are implemented, this will occur. But such an increase provides little military gain. The same is true with respect to an increase in offensive theater nuclear forces, whether long-range or battlefield. An American defense is a more efficient way to ensure the survival of the U.S. strategic retaliatory capability, and it would significantly enhance the credibility of our threat to use nuclear weapons to defend Europe. The best alternative would be to field an adequate nonnuclear defense, which could be done for a modest 4 to 5 percent of NATO's GNP. But in the absence of that, some action must be taken. The worst possible alternative would be to do nothing at all.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

The basic characteristics of nuclear warfare that set these weapons apart from all others at the beginning of the nuclear age—their overwhelming destructive capability and the impossibility of mounting an effective defense against them—remain unchanged. Any nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union would inevitably lead to levels of death and destruction that would have to be seen, in McGeorge Bundy's words, "as an unexampled failure of statesmanship."[17] This is not even to consider secondary effects such as genetic and environmental damage. Deterring the use of nuclear weapons must remain the predominant objective of our own nuclear force, even as we attempt to fashion a national strategy to ensure our economic and political strength and to contain Soviet expansion.

The continued Soviet buildup of offensive nuclear forces, particularly when combined with their buildup of conventional forces, has made the maintenance of stable deterrence more difficult. The Soviet capability to respond in kind to any possible use of nuclear weapons by the United States, and perhaps even to achieve momentary military advantages, makes the U.S. threat to use nuclear weapons in defense less credible. Since World War II we have relied on the credibility of this threat to deter Soviet nuclear aggression. We have also relied on the "extended deterrence" of nuclear weapons to supplement the deterrent effect of our conventional forces. To keep each of these aspects of deterrence credible will require increased attention to the operational and social aspects of nuclear strategy. We must accept the fact that the social aspects of an effective deterrence policy are no less important than its technological aspects. Programs

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and policies must be put in place that enhance social cohesion, that demonstrate the will to carry through on the strategy that we in the Western world subscribe to. It is the challenge of this political objective that most demands our attention.

If we are to remain secure, we must restore not only political cohesion to the Western alliance, but a sensible political relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union as well. Such a relationship will of necessity provide for arms control. If we are able to maintain the arms control agreements reached to date, including the ABM treaty and SALT II, we will be a step ahead. We can only hope that the administration that takes office in January of 1981 can restore order to our political relationships and avoid the necessity of a major defense program change such as the one suggested here.

Unfortunately, the risk of this not happening is very real. Therefore the conceptualizing of concrete policies to improve our strategic nuclear posture becomes imperative. Adding limited defenses to our traditional doctrine is simply the best of a set of difficult choices. Such defenses would make our threatened use of battlefield nuclear weapons more credible, and they would restore a measure of extended deterrence; battlefield weapons could be used with the knowledge that only a massive Soviet attack would harm the U.S. homeland. Thus, the defense would create a second firebreak in the ladder of escalation.

In contrast, taking no action now will certainly contribute to a further weakening of the Western alliance. We could continue to deploy strategic offensive weapons. But adding more offensive programs to those already undertaken serves no ascertainable strategic purpose. Even the MX (which faces serious technical and environmental challenges and may therefore never be deployed) will not fundamentally affect our strategic nuclear posture. At best, it will stabilize the existing structure of the strategic nuclear balance. But it would have only a limited effect on the calculus of risks an American president would have to face in deciding to use battlefield nuclear weapons to stop a Soviet invasion.

A strategic policy that includes at least a modest effort to actively defend our population is much more likely to receive strong political support than a strategy based on either a large increase in conventional forces or a continued buildup of nuclear offensive forces. The Safeguard ABM system barely passed Congress in 1970. Vice President Agnew broke a tied vote in favor of the system, but the context of that vote should be recalled. We were in the midst of a desperately unpopular war, with sentiment against the Pentagon running high. The Congress was largely hostile to the defense and national security policies of Richard Nixon. The prospects for arms control were bright, and many policymakers saw the U.S. continuation of ABM deployments as a useless waste of money or, at worst, as the death blow to arms control.

Today the domestic political climate differs dramatically. Congress seems determined to exempt defense programs from budget-cutting proposals and, indeed, seems bent on maintaining a significant real increase in defense spending. The military and technological situation has also changed. As a result of the combination of the increased size of offensive forces (10,000 warheads) and better ABMs, it is now possible to build a "light" ABM that would work while not threatening assured destruction capabilities.

One factor that has not changed since 1970 is the difficulty in reconciling fundamental American values and beliefs with the seemingly inhuman strategy

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of maintaining our security through the threat to kill millions of Soviet citizens. I believe that there would be considerable support for a movement of our strategy toward greater reliance on an active defense and away from a primary reliance on offensive retaliation.

It is important to recognize that the only immediate action required to implement this revised strategy is to increase ABM R&D significantly. There is no possibility of the United States being ready to start the deployment of new defensive systems before the middle 1980s. Thus, there is no need at this time to open a renegotiation of the ABM treaty. Nor would there be any inconsistency between the ratification of SALT II and the initiating of a program that would lead eventually to deployment of limited defense. Rather, SALT II would help with several military problems, and ratification would increase public support for our defense posture.

Announcing a return to a partial dependence on active defenses in U.S. strategy, accompanied by a serious ABM development program aimed at early deployment of a limited system (1985-87), would in many ways provide the best possible "bargaining chip." Defense programs undertaken for no purpose other than to create a concession for later negotiations simply undercut both the credibility of our negotiating position and the public's support for our defense program. But, as I have argued throughout this paper, we have a legitimate strategic need for a limited defense. Our deployment of such a defense should remain open to negotiation; our policy objective should be a successful negotiation that, when combined with a successful foreign policy, might eliminate the need for its deployment. If the negotiations fail, however, the program is the best response we are likely to have.

Much of the deterrent effect of our nuclear force is, in the final analysis, the result of forcing the Soviet Union to live with uncertainty. A light defense would make Soviet leaders even more uncertain than they are today about their ability to avoid a U.S. nuclear response to any aggression against vital Western interests. Should nuclear weapons be used, the Soviets would have to remain uncertain that escalation could be stopped, despite the second firebreak created by a limited defense. And even if they build a defense of their own and expand their civil defense programs, they could never be confident that their society would survive an all-out exchange.

Ultimately, the Soviet Union will see the wisdom of accepting serious restraints in their military efforts, both in force deployments (nuclear and conventional) and in geopolitical expansionism. Their acceptance of such restraint is a necessary condition to achieving a stable détente and a reduction of the risks inherent in the mutual balance of terror upon which we now rely so heavily for our security. But for the 1980s we must be prepared to rely on that balance of terror to deter the use of nuclear weapons, whose destructive powers could lead to an unimaginable tragedy for mankind.

REFERENCES

[1]Bernard Brodie (ed.), *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company), 1946, p. 76, as quoted in *The Nuclear Question*, M. Mandlebaum, p. 20. Mandlebaum's book is a useful history of U.S. nuclear strategy.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[2]U.S. Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), pp. 65-66.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), pp. 217-8.

[5]Paul Nitze, "Assuring Strategic Stability in a Nuclear Age," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1976, p. 207. I respond in "Assuring Strategic Stability, An Alternative View," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1976, p. 462.

[6]Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1979. See also an earlier article in which some of the same themes are developed: "The Relevance of Traditional Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1973, p. 253.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," p. 984. Throughout his article Mr. Howard is less than completely clear when he speaks of the "operational" aspects of war. Most frequently, he seems to be concerned with nonnuclear war, but he also uses the term to connote nuclear operations.

[9]Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," p. 983.

[10]Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 210, 218.

[11]Alice Kimball Smith, *A Peril and a Hope: A Scientist Movement in America, 1945-47* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 13-14.

[12]Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 550.

[13]As this article goes to press, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown has made public the outlines of a revised nuclear strategy ("PD-59"). But its details remain unclear, and it is alleged to differ little from previous strategy.

[14]See McGeorge Bundy, "The Future of Strategic Deterrence," *Survival*, November/December 1979, p. 270, for the history on this point.

[15]The one area in which the West could make a major improvement in its nuclear war-fighting capability is that of nuclear protection for troops in the field. Soviet forces are considerably better prepared to operate in areas of radioactive contamination, despite the fact that it is the West that threatens to use nuclear weapons first to stop a Soviet attack in Europe.

[16]Lodal, "Assuring Strategic Stability." I have argued elsewhere that just such a reaction explains at least part of the very large Soviet MIRV program that first emerged in 1972.

[17]Bundy, "The Future of Strategic Deterrence," p. 269.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SIDNEY D. DRELL

Arms Control: Is There Still Hope?

THE PATTERN OF RECENT EVENTS provides very little encouragement and few, if any, auspicious signals for the future of arms control. SALT II has been derailed, at least temporarily; the mutual balanced force reduction talks in Vienna remain stalled; little progress is reported from the negotiations for a comprehensive test ban treaty or for limitations on antisatellite activities. Indeed, one hears more these days about rearming than about reducing arms.

Advances in weapons technologies are bringing with them prospects of a broader repertoire of missions for our nuclear armories, which continue to grow in numbers and improve in quality. More and more we hear of *usable* nuclear weapons and of nuclear war-fighting and winning. With these developments we have come once more to one of those perilous forks in the road from which several very different paths diverge. It is time for us to stop and ask as we enter a new decade: What are our goals? Where are we going? Do we even still remember what nuclear explosions do? Does the the post-Hiroshima generation actually appreciate the horror of nuclear weapons and the dangers posed by the prospect of a nuclear conflict?

Thirty-five years have passed since the fireballs of the first atomic bombs over Alamagordo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki lighted the dawn of the nuclear age, the age Winston Churchill called "the second coming in wrath." Their increase by a factor of one thousand in the scale of destructiveness was followed swiftly by yet another increase—again by a factor of one thousand—in explosive power with the advent of the hydrogen bomb. Since then the world has stockpiled some forty thousand nuclear bombs, about 99 percent of which belong to the United States and the Soviet Union. This growth of nuclear stockpiles has occurred at the same time as, and despite, frequent official statements affirming the nations' solemn commitments to control and reduce the nuclear threat; despite also the realization that we have accumulated so many nuclear weapons that the survival of civilization as we know it would be threatened were our nuclear stockpiles ever unleashed. Indeed, the number of nuclear warheads deployed by the United States and the Soviet Union on our long-range strategic systems has grown to more than fifteen thousand, or by a factor of more than two and one-half since we began the intensive SALT negotiating efforts a little more than ten years ago, with the primary purpose to limit these very same weapons. Not only have they increased in numbers, their prodigious tech-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nological improvements have created new difficulties for arms control, for verification, and for strategic stability at a faster pace than negotiations have progressed.

We may draw some comfort from the fact that during all this period our fear, revulsion, and respect for nuclear weapons have been effective in keeping us from using them—in spite of the fact that there have been numerous conflicts and opportunities. Indeed, deterrence has worked for more than three decades because we have recognized so far that the purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear war, and we have behaved accordingly. But how long will deterrence last? The latest advances in weapons technology, especially in missile accuracy and reliability, now threaten to erode the very doctrine of deterrence itself. In its place are offered visions of limited nuclear war-fighting and winning. I consider these visions to be phantoms, phantoms that are dangerous as well as technically false. Their emergence, however, emphasizes the urgent need for us to learn to do things differently. That need is even more urgent now than it was twenty years ago when Jerome Wiesner wrote so eloquently in the 1960 issue of *Daedalus* devoted to arms control: "Mankind's almost universal desire is to halt the frightening arms race and to provide, by rule of law, the security now sought so futilely from nuclear armaments and ballistic missiles. While the goal is clearly visible, the course is not."

Today we are still faced with a deadly dangerous dilemma. On one hand, we have no evidence from history to lead to the conclusion that war in the long run can be avoided. On the other hand, there is also no evidence from history to tell us what a nuclear war would mean. An all-out nuclear conflict would shatter the whole fabric of our society and of our civilization built over the centuries. Beyond that, the long-term worldwide effects of a major nuclear conflict on man and the environment, and on their future evolution, are largely unpredictable. This dilemma of our nuclear times could be resolved in principle by doing away with war—or by doing away with nuclear weapons. Although neither of these achievements is very likely in the coming decade, or in the foreseeable future, they stand as mankind's ultimate goals. They are, moreover, goals to be addressed with some determination and hope.

There is an old Navy saying to the effect that one wants to avoid disaster on his watch. In the past the limited goal of "avoiding disaster on one's watch" has proved tolerable for national security policy. But now that we are sitting on a deadly nuclear powder keg, such a view is no longer good enough. We can no longer work simply to "get by on our watch." Not only must we avoid a nuclear conflict in our time, we must also meet the challenge to reduce and ultimately to remove the threat of a nuclear holocaust. This is the greatest challenge of our generation as well as our obligation to future generations.

Andrei Sakharov has often expressed this same priority, most recently in a statement from his lonely exile in Gorky: "I consider that averting thermonuclear war has absolute priority over all other problems of our times." How, then, should we begin addressing the question of nuclear survival? The recent collapse of the SALT II ratification process reminds us forcefully that it is necessary to have momentum and hope in our broad political task of resolving conflicts and tensions while building toward a stable, just, and peaceful

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

international order. In the narrower focus of efforts to control and reduce nuclear weapons and to avoid, or at least to minimize, the likelihood of nuclear conflict, we have, in practice, but two means available to us: formal negotiations and mutual restraint in new weapons programs. (A third means, unilateral disarmament, I do not believe can carry us very far.) These two means—negotiations and mutual restraint—need not and should not be mutually exclusive. Indeed, we need them both! The record of the past two decades shows that neither means alone will suffice if we are to make effective progress in controlling and reducing nuclear weapons. During this time we have also experienced the difficulties that arise when negotiations have been allowed to stimulate antirestraint in the race to accumulate bargaining chips that too often, like Pinocchio, develop lives of their own.

Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union has a laudable record of restraint. Two notable examples of missed opportunities are MIRVs and the continuing ICBM buildup following SALT I. Recall that the original justification for MIRVs was for penetrating ballistic missile defenses by saturating their computers and radars and overwhelming their defensive firepower with an intense rain of many warheads. Nevertheless, U.S. MIRV programs proceeded full tilt after the SALT I treaty, which severely limited the deployment of ABM defenses and thereby removed the purported rationale for MIRVs. Recall also that the consequence of the SALT I interim agreement on offensive systems was primarily to deflect the main focus of work from the restricted to unrestricted areas rather than to decrease its intensity. As a result, work proceeded full speed on missile improvements, leading to greater accuracy and reliability, and on more extensive MIRV deployments as the Soviets, in particular, built right up to the SALT limits.

Independent of this dismal record of failure in restraint, both the United States and the Soviet Union have recognized the importance of negotiations and have worked hard at them, at least until very recently. Our progress is modest; to many, the achievements after years of effort are disappointing. They are not, however, negligible. In particular, we have the all-important SALT I treaty limiting ballistic missile defenses to a very low level of deployment. And, of course, we also have the limited atmospheric test ban treaty, on the books since 1963. This is a major achievement. We, as will generations to come, value that treaty primarily for its contribution to protecting our environment from radioactive fallout. As an arms control measure, perhaps its greatest value was in setting so important and successful a precedent of visible cooperation in the arena of nuclear weapons between the two major nuclear powers.

Nevertheless, independent of these achievements and of the eventual fate of the SALT II treaty, the bankruptcy of modern man in our approach to nuclear weapons is evident. These are weapons of mass destruction, and the possibility of ever using such weapons raises fundamental ethical and moral issues that should be faced at the center of our national and international discussions and negotiations of nuclear weapons policy. Yet today these issues are muted in policy formulation as we continue to proliferate and diversify our nuclear stockpiles. How long can and will we continue to avoid the fundamental questions of using weapons of mass destruction? As Enrico Fermi and Isidor Rabi wrote in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their addendum to the report by the General Advisory Committee of the AEC in 1949 on the decision of whether or not to develop the so-called "super":

> It is clear that the use of such a weapon cannot be justified on any ethical ground which gives a human being a certain individuality and dignity even if he happens to be a resident of an enemy country.
>
> The fact that no limits exist to the destructiveness of this weapon makes its very existence and the knowledge of its construction a danger to humanity as a whole. It is necessarily an evil thing considered in any light.

At about this same time George Kennan wrote a personal paper as the counselor to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, expressing his concerns about the impact on U.S. policy of a growing reliance on atomic weapons of mass destruction in our arsenals. The occasion was his resignation as director of the State Department Planning Staff, and he summarized his concerns eloquently:

> The weapons of mass destruction . . . reach backward beyond the frontiers of western civilization, to the concepts of warfare which were once familiar to the Asiatic hordes. They cannot really be reconciled with a political purpose directed to shaping, rather than destroying, the lives of the adversary. They fail to take account of the ultimate responsibility of men for one another, and even for each other's errors and mistakes. They imply the admission that man not only can be but is his own worst and most terrible enemy.

And now thirty years and forty thousand nuclear weapons later the question of whether the use of nuclear weapons can be justified on any ethical grounds is rarely heard in our national debates, and almost never in our formal negotiations. All attention is riveted on questions such as how to put a ceiling on the further growth in numbers of weapons by limiting the number of warheads to no more than ten per ICBM or fourteen per sea-launched ballistic missile! I am not suggesting that this is not also, in fact, an important question—as is our concern for maintaining a strategic stability based on our confidence that our nuclear weapons cannot be destroyed in a preemptive attack against them. But we seem to have so completely accepted the inevitability of a nuclear overarmed world, that we are lost in the maze of such details *alone*. Enmeshed in these details, we seem to have lost view of the *scale* of the problem. We have grown so relaxed about the threat and so accustomed to coexistence as mutual hostages under a nuclear sword of Damocles, that all our attention and effort is devoted to finely tuning a nuclear balance.

With regard to our vast nuclear armories, which are continually being refined and polished and admired, I am reminded of the famous lines from Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man:*

> Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated, needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Recall how Pope continues:

> But where th' Extreme of Vice, was ne'er agreed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and concludes:

> No creature own it in the first degree,
> But thinks his neighbour further gone than he.

In a nutshell, that expresses our dilemma. Consumed by a detailed, quantitative balancing of the nuclear vice that we have learned to endure and now embrace, each country accuses the other of owning more of what is evil than he himself possesses, and our nuclear debates and discussions have become like those of the scholastics of the thirteenth century. To them, the fundamental ethical and moral issues of religion had degenerated largely into questions of how many angels can fit on the head of a pin! In his recent book *Endgame: The Inside Story of Salt II*, Strobe Talbott has drawn the macabre parallel of how, for us, the nuclear debate has similarly microscoped down to how many MIRVs can fit on the head of our modern pins, the ICBMs. And, just as the desolation and devastation of the fourteenth century, with its hundred years of wars, followed the thirteenth, are we destined to a similar or a worse fate in the twenty-first? Will future historians, if there are any, look back on the second half of the twentieth century as the golden age of nuclear scholastics?

If modern civilization is to improve its chances for avoiding nuclear holocaust in the long run, it is absolutely necessary to return to fundamental issues such as the one raised by Fermi and Rabi: "It is clear that the use of such a weapon cannot be justified on any ethical ground which gives a human being a certain individuality and dignity even if he happens to be a resident of an enemy country." In today's world, with the initial conditions fixed by the existence of so many thousands of nuclear bombs and strategic rockets and bombers, we should not and cannot responsibly duck the same detailed issues that SALT has elevated to such exaggerated prominence. It will help us to "get by on this watch" if we can reach agreement on these specific issues—such as by negotiating verifiable limits on numbers of warheads per missile, or on the volume, total thrust, and total throw-weight of different missile or bomber types. But it is now abundantly clear that we cannot and will not get very far if *all* our concerns and efforts are focused very narrowly on such detailed issues. Furthermore, the rapidly advancing weapons technology and the growing repertoire of uses and targets for nuclear weapons are threatening to remove even the limited security we have sought through mutual deterrence.

Before unbridled technology leads to this, we had better identify some basic principles that we must adhere to if we are to keep control over what is happening. Perhaps then we may succeed in shaping the future directions in arms control. I identify six such major principles. If we can hold to them and insist that they define the context within which consistent negotiating policies and restraint measures will be pursued, we may have a chance. These principles are:

1. The sole purpose of nuclear weapons in today's world, and for as long as they are deployed, must be to *deter* nuclear war. No other purpose should be assigned them.

In singling out deterrence of nuclear attack among the missions of our strategic nuclear forces, I am emphasizing that there are no sensible alternatives to a policy of deterrence for the foreseeable future. Other missions for our strategic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nuclear forces have frequently been proposed, ranging from political or military coercion to limited nuclear war-fighting and "winning." However, you can't win if you don't survive. I am convinced that the overwhelmingly likely course of events of actually implementing any of these limited missions would be an escalation of hostilities to an almost total mutual destruction. Furthermore, this is a destruction against which, on technical grounds alone, there is no effective defense. Hence, I conclude that deterrence of nuclear attack is the proper mission of our nuclear forces. Weapons development and force structures must be planned toward this goal as the single overriding priority.

It has become stylish this year for revisionists to criticize as being immoral this view of deterrence as the U.S. strategic policy—it is frequently caricatured with the acronym MAD, for mutual assured destruction. We are told that the United States should not be targeting cities and planning the annihilation of tens to hundreds of millions of people—but, with a higher morality, should target military and counterforce targets, sparing the innocent civilians. Frankly, I am puzzled as to why this strawman has been exhumed and is being flailed at this time, since it represents a circumstance with essentially no logical connection with today's weapons realities.

Assured destruction requires but a small percentage of our deployed warheads. Of our current total of well over nine thousand nuclear warheads on our strategic bombers and missiles, only a few hundred are needed to obliterate the largest Soviet cities along with two thirds of their total industrial base and close to 100 million residents—and this is due to immediate damage alone. Evidently, the United States has a sizable counterforce capacity in addition to its capacity for assured destruction. In fact, we have had a substantial counterforce capability since the early 1960s. At present the characteristics as well as the large numbers of our rapidly retargettable, highly MIRVed forces present very extensive counterforce capabilities. They give us, in particular, the potential to respond in measure with the provocation—known as flexible response—against a broad spectrum of Soviet military targets, including naval bases, air bases, petroleum depots, assembly points, transshipment points, and so on. A broad repertoire of flexible response and counterforce is a reality of today's strategic forces—both for the United States and the Soviet Union. In fact, it has long been recognized that flexible response enhances deterrence by increasing the range of political options and maneuvers prior to conflict. Moreover, flexible response is still growing as a result of our technical virtuosity with nuclear weaponry. It is this very growth in the repertoire of conterforce missions, to include the capabilities to strike an opponent's missile forces in their hardened silos, that we now see posing a threat to deterrence. Today's debate in the United States on Minuteman vulnerability and the need for a new basing scheme for a large new MX missile with ten MIRVs is a reaction to the developing Soviet counterforce threat against the Minuteman silos.

The deployment of missiles that pose substantial and credible preemptive threats against major components of each other's arsenals of nuclear retaliatory forces conflicts with the goal of maintaining a stable strategic deterrence. A clear choice between these two alternatives must be made by both the Soviet Union and the United States. At this perilous fork in the road, both countries must effectively limit, as well as direct, the development of new weapons technology

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in order to maintain a deterrence based on survivable retaliatory forces. Such a stable deterrence is not an end in itself, but it can provide a base from which to work toward substantial reductions and, eventually, toward comprehensive disarmament.

2. No matter how small its yield, a nuclear weapon is fundamentally different from a nonnuclear one. It has a long memory—a deadly radioactive memory. Furthermore, once the first nuclear weapon is used in anger, once the one-way bridge is crossed from nonnuclear to nuclear conflict, what will restrain the nations involved from escalating further when they believe their vital interests are at stake and they hold such vast stores of nuclear weapons in reserve? Will there be any effective limiting forces amidst the confusion and pressure of battle?

This assertion that there is a fundamental difference between nuclear and nonnuclear weapons was widely challenged several years ago during the extended debate about the so-called neutron bomb—the enhanced radiation weapon that would be tailored to give more radiation that is deadly to humans only, but less blast and heat that destroys everything in their way. This weapon was proposed as a more usable nuclear weapon—particularly in the defense of highly developed and densely populated areas such as Western Europe—because of the reduced collateral damage it would produce if delivered with precise accuracy. On this basis it was argued that the improved warhead, by making the initial use of nuclear weapons in battle seem more credible, would enhance deterrence. However, there is another side to this coin. By the same token, it can be argued that this warhead also *increases* the likelihood that nuclear weapons would actually be used in combat. Once this or any other nuclear weapon has been used, the danger of further nuclear escalation is just as great. A decision to use the neutron bomb would be no less grave than a decision to use any other tactical nuclear weapons. I can think of no more dangerous folly than trying to fuzz the fundamental difference between nuclear and nonnuclear weapons.

3. Nuclear war would be so great an extrapolation of the scale of disaster in human experience, and so great a physical disturbance of our environment and ecosphere, that the unknowns of a nuclear conflict clearly far outweigh the knowns or predictables. Yet there appear more and more detailed calculations that describe how hundreds of millions of people will behave in all-out conflict, when deadly radioactive rain will fall for many months. These calculations also predict casualty levels and recovery times with incredible precision. The fascination with these calculations reminds me of the exchange in George Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara* between Lomax, a young man-about-town, and Andrew Undershaft, a millionaire munitions manufacturer. To Lomax's comment, "Well, the more destructive war becomes, the sooner it will be abolished, eh?" Undershaft retorts: "Not at all. The more destructive war becomes the more fascinating we find it."

Keep this in mind when you hear claims made on the basis of calculations as to how much civil defense will contribute to the survival of how many people, and thereby to an ultimate victory, in a nuclear war for a nation that will suffer

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only 20 million fatalities while killing 60 million of their enemy! It is also well to keep in mind how rapidly individual units of society descend to chaos and fall apart at much lower levels of stress—just remember what happens during sudden blackouts. It makes you wonder how societies will react after just one thermonuclear weapon has hit—much less a hundred or several thousand.

Civil defense is, of course, a very important issue. It is also a very personal, and at times emotional, one because it touches the basic human instinct of survival. The potential for disaster is ever present in our society, and it hardly seems prudent to make no plans for survival or recovery in the event of a natural or a man-made disaster or accident, nuclear or otherwise. It is one thing, however, to view civil defense preparations as one does the lifeboats on an ocean liner, as insurance against unanticipated disasters. It would be quite a different matter to chart a course through ice fields and to risk running into icebergs because one plans to rely on the lifeboats for survival. The analogue of this reckless course would be to prepare to wage limited nuclear conflicts, relying on extensive civil defense preparations to reduce nationwide fatalities due to fallout to relatively low levels. Yet this is precisely what the Defense Department advocated in late 1974 in its presentation to the Congress. Fortunately, many of the claims of civil defense effectiveness and of prospects of "acceptably low" casualty levels were quickly shown to be false in a study organized by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, and the United States did not reorient its basic policy of deterrence toward one of preparing, on dubious technical and dangerous strategic grounds, for limited nuclear war-fighting.

4. In striving for progress in arms control, one needs bold steps that are timely and negotiable—and preferably simple. In order to begin and to sustain such bold steps, there must exist a strong political will and commitment by our leaders. Otherwise, the experts become mired—at times, hopelessly—in microscopic issues of technical balance, in insignificantly delicate details. The SALT II negotiations became an object lesson on this very point. There are *no* issues of nuclear survival that require the negotiation of a finely tuned balance. The crucial value of political will and decisiveness for progress was well illustrated early in 1972. After several years of almost stalemated haggling both within the government as well as in the negotiations themselves, President Nixon provided an important impetus when he announced that we *would* have an ABM treaty that year. And, indeed, it was not long thereafter that the experts successfully negotiated an ABM treaty that remains our greatest arms control achievement at this time. There is also a lesson in the failure of the comprehensive SALT II proposal of March 1977 by the Carter Administration. This proposal called for substantial reductions in the deployment of strategic forces, along with restraints on missile tests that would have prevented, or at least greatly delayed, the weapons improvements that have created today's worries about ICBM vulnerability and the perceived need for the MX. Unfortunately, that most important part of the March comprehensive proposal was burdened by many detailed numerical provisions that were highly contentious; the proposal was presented publicly in a manner that diminished its negotiability; and eventually there was no alternative but to retreat from its bold and imaginative

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provisions. I hope the lesson learned from that failure will improve negotiating tactics in the future, but not scare either the United States or the Soviet Union from making bold proposals.

5. In our society there is no substitute for, nor power equal to that of, a responsible public constituency that is informed and aware of the basic issues of nuclear weapons policy. One need not master all technical details in the arms control debate, but the question of *scale* must be comprehended.

In "avoiding disaster on our watch" for the past thirty-five years, the searing, vivid memories of the holocaust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been important. I wish I knew an effective means to keep those memories from fading away. A world that retains such vast nuclear armories as we have today, but that loses its special fear and appreciation of their enormous scale of destructiveness, will be a more dangerous place to live. A nuclear overarmed world that has forgotten the horror that led five-year-old Myeko in John Hersey's *Hiroshima* to ask, in the midst of the dust and debris of the devastated city, "Why is it night already?" is surely not safe.

6. Arms control is an important part of our national security. Thus far we have had no effective controls on offensive nuclear weaponry, and it is clear that each step forward in the arms race to more and improved weapons has *lessened* our security. If we are to reverse this trend, it will be necessary to understand the arms control impact of new weapons before making a decision whether to deploy them. The importance of the arms control factor was understood, and played an essential role, in the ABM debate of ten years ago. This also led to our negotiating the very valuable SALT I treaty that severely limited ABM deployments. By way of contrast, we lost important opportunities for arms control by the decision to move ahead on MIRVs without first making a serious effort to avoid their extensive deployment. At this very time we see the dollar costs and the strategic costs of that lost opportunity in the form of the MX program. The MX is designed to be the U.S. response to the growing threat to our land-based Minuteman force posed by the highly accurate and reliable MIRVed ICBMs now being deployed by the Soviet Union. It is a symbol of the failure of arms control.

The deployment of the MX is a very major decision now being faced by our country. Not only will it shape the U.S. nuclear deterrent through the rest of this century, it will also have a major effect on the future of arms control. For these reasons I want to describe it in some detail.

As currently proposed by the Carter Administration, MX refers to a large new missile and to a new basing scheme. The missile is the largest one consistent with the provisions of SALT II. Its warhead is fractionated into ten MIRVs, which is also the largest number for an ICBM that is consistent with SALT II. (Do we see here, unfortunately, another effect of negotiations on restraint?) The proposed MX deployment is in a land-based multiple aimpoint system that relies extensively on secrecy and deception in order to maintain uncertainty in the location of the missile, so that it cannot be targeted. Until a short time ago this basing scheme took the form of two hundred racetracks. The racetracks have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

since been straightened out into a linear grid pattern, but this change has very little impact on the operational complexities and deficiencies of the system. On each grid there will be twenty-three hardened concrete shelters, one genuine MX missile, and twenty-two dummy missiles. The dummy missiles are there to protect the location uncertainty of the real one by simulating all the signatures of a real MX in each of the shelters or on the move between shelters.

The first question it is natural to ask about the MX is: Do we need it? The loss of the Minuteman force would not mean the loss of U.S. retaliatory capability. The other two legs of our strategic triad include approximately three fourths of our deployed nuclear warheads. They are secure and are being strengthened, the strategic bombers with longer-range air-launched cruise missiles and the nuclear submarines with the modern new Trident boats, as well as the longer-range and more powerful Trident missiles. Therefore, it is natural to ask whether we need to respond at this time to the perceived growing threat to our land-based ICBMs in the fixed, hardened silos. Apparently, this question has already been answered in the affirmative by the country for a variety of reasons, in part political, in part strategic, and in part technical. It has been judged to be an unacceptable policy for the United States simply to accept, without a response, a substantial decrease in confidence in the invulnerability of a major component of our strategic retaliatory power, and we are now moving ahead with an MX program. The missile itself is being developed with initial flight tests scheduled in 1983. The basing scheme, however, is still being debated in the Congress.

Although I recognize that the Carter Administration has made a serious effort to devise a basing mode that is consistent with the past record of the SALT negotiations, and that will not impede prospects for future progress in arms control, I have serious problems with its proposal. I believe that a linear grid scheme—and, in fact, any land-based multiple aimpoint scheme—is seriously flawed for contributing to our national security and, furthermore, it presents serious problems for arms control. I list the following as its most serious problems:

- The requirement of maintaining confidence in secrecy, in deception, and in extensive simulation procedures amidst our society.

- An acute sensitivity to the threat. It is necessary to be able to forecast accurately the number of warheads the Soviets will be deploying and that could threaten the MX. In particular, the SALT II restraints on numbers of warheads per missile, as well as on total numbers of missiles, are required in order to plan the number of shelters and dummy missiles we will have to deploy. In the absence of current or future SALT limits on the maximum number of threatening Soviet warheads, a multiple aimpoint system has no assurance of catching up with the threat. It may lead to nothing more than an open-ended race between Soviet warheads and U.S. concrete shelters—hardly an attractive prospect. An alternative prospect of defending the MX with an antiballistic missile system has also been discussed. This would require abrogating the ABM treaty of SALT I, an even less attractive prospect.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

- The requirement of cooperative operational procedures to ensure that no more than the stipulated number of missiles are deployed in the guise of decoys; these procedures, which include barriers on access roads and removable plugs in ceilings of assembly buildings and shelters to allow periodic satellite viewing, will further stress the verification requirements of an enforceable arms control treaty. This will be a particular problem if the Soviet Union follows our example by deploying a multiple aimpoint system of their own as their response to the extensive countersilo threat against their ICBMs that will be posed by the two thousand very accurate MIRVs on our two hundred MX missiles.

The United States should not now make the commitment to deploy the MX linear grid system. It has flaws, and creates difficulties. Moreover, it is not necessary for us to plunge ahead at this time—given the two other components of the strategic triad that are strong and secure and are currently being further strengthened by major modernization programs. It is precisely the strength of the triad, that one can rely confidently on two good legs while solving the vulnerabilities that threaten the third one. It is far more important that we make a wise decision than a quick one for the new MX deployment.

As a technical man, I realize that it is not always possible to come up with a good technical answer to every technical problem, but I am confident that we can do beter than the MX linear grid system, both for our national security and for arms control prospects.

It is at discouraging moments like this—with both the United States and the Soviet Union moving toward decisions on major new weapons systems and with formal arms control negotiations recessed for an indefinite period—that we must remind ourselves again why we cannot give up hope for arms control. We, meaning both the Soviet Union and the United States, must remind ourselves of the enormity of the destructive power of the nuclear weapons we are dealing with and of the scale of human tragedy and suffering if they were ever used. It is imperative that we reestablish an effective, aggressive, national—as well as international—forum for discussing the basic issues such as addressed thirty years ago by those who questioned whether the use of nuclear weapons could *ever* be justified on *any* ethical grounds. It is not enough just to discuss and analyze the nuts and bolts of weapons technology. We must never lose sight of the change in the nature of war due to nuclear weapons. Shakespeare in *Henry IV, Part II*, wrote of the Archbishop of York who could justify his path of insurrection by saying:

> I have in equal balance justly weighed
> What wrongs our arms may do, what wrongs we suffer,
> And find our griefs heavier than our offences.

That was before the nuclear era, which in our times transforms the Archbishop of York into Father Siemes, a Jesuit priest writing from the rubble of Hiroshima to the Holy See in Rome, as reported by John Hersey:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> The crux of the matter is whether total war in its present form is justifiable, even when it serves a just purpose.

That question is today as inescapable as it is difficult. President Kennedy addressed it directly in his speech "Toward a Strategy of Peace," at American University in 1963:

> I speak of peace because of the new face of war. Total war makes no sense in an age when great powers can maintain large and relatively invulnerable nuclear forces and refuse to surrender without resort to these forces. It makes no sense in an age when a single nuclear weapon contains almost 10 times the explosive force delivered by all of the Allied airforces in the Second World War. It makes no sense in an age when the deadly poisons produced by a nuclear exchange would be carried by the wind and water and soil and seed to the far corners of the globe and to generations yet unborn. . . . Peace need not be impracticable, and war need not be inevitable.

Finally, we—and by this I mean, of course, the Soviet Union as well as the United States—must also not lose sight of the eventual goal of eradicating the vice of nuclear weapons as we parry and propagandize as to who owns, in Alexander Pope's words, the "Extreme of Vice." Right now is the time when it is crucial that both sides adhere to rules of reasonable self-restraint until negotiations get back on track. It is surely a deeply shared need of the United States and the Soviet Union not to let too many more watches pass before we make genuine progress in controlling and reducing nuclear weapons.

References

This paper is based on talks that I gave at the Leo Szilard Award session of the American Physical Society (April 29, 1980, Washington, D.C.) and at the M.I.T. Faculty Convocation (May 21, 1980, Cambridge, Mass.) in honor of Jerome B. Wiesner on his retirement as president of M.I.T.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Notes on Contributors

SHAHRAM CHUBIN, born in 1944 in Tehran, is director of the Regional Security Programme at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. He is the author of *Iran's Foreign Relations* (1974) and *Soviet Foreign Policy toward Iran and the Gulf* (1980). His area of interest for the past ten years has been the politics of the Persian Gulf.

JORGE I. DOMÍNGUEZ, born in 1945 in Havana, is professor of government at Harvard University. He is the author of *Cuba: Order and Revolution* (1978) and *Insurrection or Loyalty: The Breakdown of the Spanish American Empire* (1980), and co-author of *Enhancing Global Human Rights* (1979).

SIDNEY D. DRELL, born in 1926 in Atlantic City, is Lewis M. Terman Professor and deputy director of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, Stanford University. He is the co-author of *Relativistic Quantum Mechanics* (1964) and *Relativistic Quantum Fields* (1965) and the author of numerous research papers in theoretical physics. He served as consultant to the President's Science Advisory Committee, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and to Congress and the Defense Department. He received the Leo Szilard Award for physics in the public interest in 1980.

COLIN S. GRAY, born in 1943 in Witney, Oxfordshire, England, is director of National Security Studies at the Hudson Institute. He is the author of *The Soviet-American Arms Race* (1976) and *Strategic Studies and Public Policy: The American Experience* (forthcoming), and numerous articles on strategic theory.

DAVID HOLLOWAY, born in 1943 in Dublin, is lecturer in politics at the University of Edinburgh. He has contributed to volumes on military technology and weapons acquisition in the Soviet Union. His current research is in early Soviet atomic energy policy.

PAUL JABBER, born in 1943 in Buenos Aires, is assistant professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles. His books include *Israel and Nuclear Weapons: Present Option, Future Strategies* (1971) and *Not by War Alone: Security and Arms Control in the Middle East* (1980), and he is co-author of *The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism* (1973).

JAN M. LODAL, born in 1943 in Cooperstown, New York, is executive vice-president of American Management Systems, Inc. He was formerly director of program analysis for the National Security Council.

RICHARD PIPES, born in 1923 in Cieszyn, Poland, is Frank B. Baird, Jr., Professor of History at Harvard University. He is the author of *Formation of the Soviet Union* (1954), *Struve* (in two volumes—1970, 1980), and *Russia Under the Old Regime* (1974). He is a former director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard.

HENRY ROWEN, born in 1925 in Boston, is professor of public management in the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University. He is co-author of *Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Proliferation* (1979) and author of "The Middle East" in *Non-Proliferation and U.S. Foreign Policy* (1980), and has written numerous papers and articles on arms con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trol, nuclear proliferation, and energy policy. He is a former president of Rand Corporation, and served the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations as deputy assistant secretary of defense and assistant director, Bureau of the Budget.

ALLEN S. WHITING, born in 1926 in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, is professor of political science and associate, Center of Chinese Studies, University of Michigan. He is the author of *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (1975) and co-author of *China's Future* (1977), and is currently working on a book, "Siberian Development and East Asia: Threat or Promise?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On October 15, 1980, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences will move into its new House in Cambridge, Massachusetts. *DAEDALUS* readers should note the following changes of address, effective immediately.

All inquiries and correspondence regarding subscriptions and orders for back issues of *DAEDALUS* should be directed to:

Daedalus Subscription Department
1172 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02134

For all other matters, the new address for the *DAEDALUS* editorial offices will be:

Daedalus
Norton's Woods
140 Irving Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Also, our subscription and back copy services are now being computerized. We believe this will result in greatly improved service to *DAEDALUS* readers, but during the period of transition there may be, unavoidably, some difficulties. We hope that readers who experience problems will understand and bear with us. Above all, we ask you to notify us at once if an issue does not reach you promptly or is not properly addressed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED